

Buddhism

for Young Students



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Ven. Dr. Chuen Phangcham



The Council of Thai Bhikkhus in the U.S.A.

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Preface

The Council of Thai Bhikkhus in the U.S.A. is pleased to sponsor the re-edition of Venerable Dr. Chuen Phangcham's **Buddhism for Young Adults**, which has long since been out of print. This valuable landmark book was used for many years by Buddhist families and by schools to teach young persons the teachings and the traditions of Theravāda Buddhism. It was also used by individuals interested in Buddhism who wanted to learn more about the religion.

Buddhism for Young Adults is as relevant today as it was when it was first published. In his Introduction to the second edition, the author said, "*Buddhism gives scientific answers to life's problems in today's world. The teachings of the Enlightened One can show you the path of truth and answer your questions, such as 'Who am I? What is the purpose of life? And why am I living?' If you sincerely and intelligently study and practice the Dhamma [the teaching] and meditation, peace of mind is yours for the asking.*" Dr. Phangcham's words are as true now as they ever were. Young adults today, living in an age of video games, violent movies, vaping, drinking and drugs, and explicit sex, need the moral guidance that **Buddhism for Young Adults** can afford. And adults, too, faced with the difficulties of earning a living and raising children, can use the truths of Theravāda Buddhism expressed in the book to make some sense of their lives and to find some peace.

On this occasion of the re-edition of Dr. Phangcham's book, we echo the words with which the author ended his Introduction to the second edition:

I would like to thank Phravidessratnaporn Secretary-General, Wat Thai Washington D.C. Phra Videssitthidhammaporn Vice President, Wat Atammayatarama Buddhist Monastery, Phrakru Sripatravides Abbot of The Midwest Buddhist Meditation Center Wat Buddha Vihara Warren, Michigan, who very helpful regarding the production of this book. And Phraprasret Wat Phrathatbualungthai 22936 State Highway 202, Tehachapi, CA 93561

"May all beings be free from enmity.

May all beings be free from ill treatment.

May all beings be free from suffering.

May all beings be happy. "

Phra Rajdhammavides

President

The Council of Thai Bhikkhus in the U.S.A.

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Preface

“Buddhism for Young Students”, is the most popular of many books written by Ven. Dr. Phramaha Chuen Phangcham (Phrakru Chotidhammavides). First published in 1990, it has been reprinted five times and over 35,000 copies are in circulation in many countries. ‘Achan Chuen’ was the founder of the first Theravada Buddhist Temple in The State of Michigan, USA in 1992. He established and served as the primary abbot of Wat Buddha Vihara Temple along with The Midwest Buddhist Meditation Center (MBMC), until his death in 2008.

‘Buddhism for Young Students’, is not just for young people – it is for anyone new to Buddhism or interested in Buddhist culture and tradition. It is of great benefit for those who wish to learn about the basic principles and practices of Buddhism and how to apply them in daily life.

We at The Buddha Vihara Temple or **The Midwest Buddhist Meditation Center (MBMC)**, are very grateful to The Council of Thai Bikkhus in the USA, who will publish the sixth edition of this book with wide distribution. We offer special thanks to Phra Dhepbuddhivides – President and Phra Videssitthidhammaporn – Vice President in charge of the Propagation of Buddhism Division. On this occasion, we willingly give the original file of ‘Buddhism for Young Students’ for reprinting in good faith.

We would also like to thank Phramaha Mongkol Mangkalo (Pali 9), along with the monks and lay people of our temple for their kind assistance in preparing the original file.

Phrakru Sripatravides

*Abbot of The Midwest Buddhist Meditation Center
Wat Buddha Vihara, Warren, Michigan, USA
May 8, 2022*

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The Pali Alphabet

Pronunciation of Letters

<i>a</i>	as	u	in	but	<i>ñ</i>	as	gn	is	Signor
<i>ā</i>		"a"		art	<i>t</i>		"t"		not
<i>i</i>		"i"		pin	<i>d</i>		"d"		hid
<i>ī</i>		"i"		machine	<i>ṇ</i>		"n"		hint
<i>u</i>		"u"		put	<i>p</i>		"p"		lip
<i>ū</i>		"u"		rule	<i>b</i>		"b"		rib
<i>e</i>		"e"		ten	<i>m</i>		"m"		him
<i>ē</i>		"a"		fate	<i>y</i>		"y"		yard
<i>o</i>		"o"		hot	<i>r</i>		"r"		rat
<i>ō</i>		"o"		note	<i>l</i>		"l"		sell
<i>k</i>		"k"		key	<i>v</i>		"v"		vile
<i>g</i>		"g"		get	<i>s</i>		"s"		sit
<i>ṅ</i>		"ng"		ring	<i>h</i>		"h"		hut
<i>c</i>		"ch"		rich	<i>ḷ</i>		"l"		felt
<i>j</i>		"j"		jug	<i>ṁ</i>		"ng"		sing

The vowels "e" and "o" are always long, except when followed by a double consonant, e.g., ettha, ottha.

There is no difference between the pronunciation of "n" and "m". The former never stands at the end, but is always followed by a consonant of its group.

The dental "t" and "d" are pronounced with the tip of the tongue placed against the front upper teeth.

The aspirates "kh", "gh", "th", "dh", "th", "dh", "ph", "bh" are pronounced with "h" sound immediately following, as in blockhead, pighead, cathead, loghead, etc. where the "h" in each is combined with the preceding consonant in pronunciation.



Lesson 1

Life of the Buddha

Objections :

1. To teach the student about the story of the Buddha.
2. To teach the student about what the Buddha taught.

Consequences :

1. The student can tell who the Buddha was and why he became a monk.
2. The student can tell about what the Buddha taught.

Long ago in the country of Nepal, in the capital Kapilavatthu of a kingdom called Sakya an extraordinary child was born into the Gotama clan.

King Suddhodana's beautiful wife, Queen Siri Maha Maya gave birth to a son under the Sala trees in Lumbini park on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month which we call Visakha. This month comes around last week of May or early June. The King named his son Siddhattha. Queen Maha Maya died seven days after Siddhattha's birth and the grief-stricken king married the queen's sister, Pajapati Gotami who became the first Bhikkhuni in Buddhism.



Siddhattha was raised by his aunt/stepmother, Mahapajapati. During his early years he lived happily with his family surrounded with luxury and comfort. At the age of sixteen, he married his cousin, a beautiful princess name Yasodhara whom he affectionately called Bimba. Later on, the princess gave birth to a son, Rahula. They lived a very happy life together for thirteen years.

Until one day, during Siddhatha's trip to the Royal Gardens, he saw four things that made him very doubtful about life. He saw an old man, a sick person, a dead body and an ascetic Brahmin. Siddhatha realized that even a luxurious life could not bring real happiness, and he could never be happy while other people suffered. He then wanted to find real happiness, happiness that could be shared.

When he was twenty-nine years old, on a quiet night, the prince secretly left his palace, his wealth, his wife, and his loving son to become an ascetic.

He spent six years in the forest, studying with many Brahmin teachers and practicing extreme self-denial. He left those teachers after discovered the truth that extreme self-denial did not bring real happiness. He as well realized that his worldly wealth and life as a prince can not bring the happiness or reveal the truth about life, but neither did extreme self-denial, so he decided to try a path between the two, which we call the Middle Way.

Six years after becoming a homeless ascetic Brahmin, while sitting under the Bodhi Tree on the full moon night of the sixth lunar month (in May or Visakha), while sitting and meditating deeply, he finally reached the true happiness that he had sought. In this way Buddha attained the truth by his own efforts and this genuine happiness is called the Enlightenment. From that moment on, he was known as the Buddha, which means the Enlightened One or the Awakened One. Buddha had taught the three principles of Buddhism so people can use to guild their thoughts and actions. These principles are as follows :

1. Do not do evil.
2. Do good deeds.
3. Purify the mind.

Two months after his Enlightenment, Buddha began his teaching about the truth and the Dhamma to the followers. Many of his followers understood about the real happiness after following his teachings. As time went on the number of his disciples increased rapidly. For forty five years, the Buddha wandered over all of India,

preaching the doctrines of real happiness to the people. At the age of eighty, the Buddha felt that his life was nearly coming to an end. He went to Kusinara and there, on the full moon day of Visakha month under two Sala trees, he passed away. He left us with his most valuable and enduring teachings as well as the way to find a real happiness. Since then, his teachings spread worldwide.

Lesson 2

Threefold Doctrine of Buddhism

Objections :

1. To teach the student the three essentials of Buddhism
2. To teach the student about the basic principles of Buddhism
3. To teach the student how to follow the three Buddhist essentials

Consequences :

1. The student can answer to what the Buddhist essentials
2. The student can tell the basic principles of Buddhism
3. The student can tell which conduct follows the three Buddhist essentials in daily life and how to develop such conduct.

Johnny and his Grandma

On Sunday, the day begins early for twelve year old Johnny. The light is slowly dawning while people are having breakfast, children are crying and laughing, dogs are barking, and birds are chirping.

Johnny attends the public school from Monday to Friday. On Sunday, he helps out at home until the time to go to temple where his grandmother helps preparing meals for the monks. He also attends the Sunday School there.



Until one Sunday, after helping his grandma serve food to the monks, he asked "Grandma, why don't the monks work?"

Surprised by his question, Grandma replied "Their lives are depending on Laypeople like you and me."

"Why so?." Asked Johnny.

"According to Buddhism," said grandmother. "Monks must leave their homes and become homeless. They dedicate their lives to studying and practicing the Buddha's Dhamma for mind development. They teach the Dhamma to lay people."

What is the Dhamma?

It's the teaching of the Buddha who founded Buddhism.

What kinds of Dhamma did he teach?

Oh, many!

What's the most important one?

She paused, the fine lines relaxed down around her face and a sudden admiration for her grandson dawned in her eyes. "Johnny", she said, "You are so curious! Well, it is said that all of Buddha's teachings are important, but everything he taught can be simplified into three groups, sometimes called the Three Essentials of Buddhism."

What are they, Grandma?

The first is to avoid all evil deeds, the second is to do all good things and the third is to make the mind pure.

The little boy felt confused. Then he asked "Grandma, what does it mean to avoid all evil deeds?"

Well, it means not to kill, not to steal, not to commit sexual sin, not to lie, not to drink intoxicants or take drugs, not to use impolite words or to gossip and never to think ill of others.

Grandma, Tommy and Billy quarreled with each other at school one day. Did they do a bad thing according to this doctrine?

Oh, yes, they did.

I see. Well, what about the second one?

To do all good thing means you love others as you love yourself, help others if they need your help, go to school and do your homework regularly and obey parents and teachers.

That is all?

No, there are many. But just remember the important part of this doctrine is not doing or speaking anything that will not cause trouble to you or others. Do you understand?

I think so. What about the last one?

To make your mind pure means getting rid of greed and anger. Whenever you get greedy or angry, just remember that it's not good for you to behave so. Stay calm and collected, then your greed or anger will disappear.

"OK., Grandma, but what are merits of the Buddhist essentials?"

Merits of the Three Buddhist Essentials

1. Nobody will get into trouble because of your actions or speech.
2. You will have no enemies.
3. Your life will be happy and peaceful.
4. Your practice will benefit your family, community as a whole.
5. You are the source of peace and you should be named a real peace maker.

If a person lives without the Three Buddhist Essentials. His or her life will be full of trouble and sometime he or she may become a criminal. Nobody would love such a person. He or she could be named a problem maker or suffering maker.



How to follow the Three Buddhist Essentials

As a young Buddhist you can follow the three essentials of Buddhism by taking the following steps:

1. Always tell the truth to members of your family and keep your promises.
2. Do things willingly for members of your family; teachers and friends without pay or reward,
3. Be honest to your parents ; teachers and friends.
4. Be friendly and polite to everyone regardless of age or position,
5. Be obedient and cheerful. Obedience begins in your home.

If your parents make rules for you to follow, follow them cheerfully and wisely.

Lesson 3 The Mission

Objections :

1. *To teach the student about the Buddha's life and His mission*
2. *To teach the student about the Buddha's first group of disciples*
3. *To teach the student about the first and the last sermons of the Buddha*

Consequences :

1. *The student can explain the Buddha's life and His mission*
2. *The student can tell about the disciples and place where the Buddha gave His first sermon to the first group of His Disciples*
3. *The student can tell about the first and the last sermons of the Buddha.*

The Buddha's Mission

First two lay disciples

On a full moon night of May, while sitting in deep meditation under a Bodhi tree at Gaya city in Eastern India, Siddhattha Gotama attained Enlightenment and real happiness. He became the Buddha, the Awakened One at the age of thirty-five. Two merchants named Tapussa and Bhallika happened to pass by and saw the Buddha sitting under the Bodhi tree, so they went and offered him a honey cake meal. After eating the food, the Buddha talked to them about his new experience.



The two merchants became his first lay disciples, the first Buddhists. Students often ask : “What is Enlightenment? Enlightenment is the state of pure mind, a mind free of ignorance, hatred and from craving or “Greed”, unbounded desire.” The mind in the state of enlightenment a comprehending the truth.

First sermon and first monk disciple

Now, the Buddha was ready to begin his mission of teaching his doctrine to the people. He asked himself to whom he should first teach the Doctrine. His mind turned to his former teachers, namely, Alara Kalama and Uddhaka Rama. Howeve, the two teachers had already died. He then recalled five companions with whom he lived

before his vow to sit under the Bodhi tree until Enlightenment. The two monks were about one hundred miles away at Deer Park of Isipatana near Benares. The Buddha walked one hundred miles to give his First Sermon during the Asalha month (full moon day of July). It was known as Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta the Turning of the Wheel of Dhamma or Truth. After the sermon the five ascetics Kondanna, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahanama and Assaji realized the Eye of Dhamma or Truth. Kondanna realized liberation first and asked for a Monkhood after that for few days all of them realized the truth and asked for a monkhood. The five ascetics became the first Noble Disciples of the Buddha. This is how the first five disciples of the Buddha and the Buddhist Order had been established in the modern world.

Missionary activity

At early of one morning, the Buddha was sitting in Deer Park (of Isipatanamarugadâyan). A young man named Yasa, born in a weathy family, came near the Buddha and upon hearing the Buddha's teaching, Yasa realized that life was full of dissatisfaction, problems and troubles. He asked to become a monk in order to find real happiness. Soon afterward, the Buddha converted Yasa's parents and wife to Buddhism.

The Venerable Yasa had fifty-four lay friends. After his ordination, they agreed to ordain and follow him into the Order. Then within a few days, Yasa and his friends became Arahants (enlightened monks). The total number of Arahants was then sixty-one.

Preaching Movement

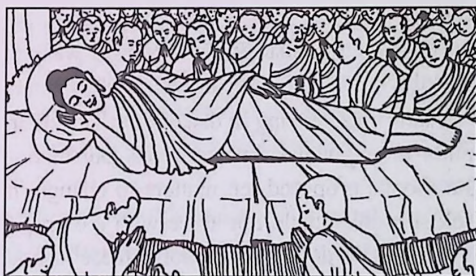
When there were enough disciples to begin shairing the Truth, Buddha told his disciples to separate and wander from place to place to teach the Truth. For this purpose, the Buddha set out on a life long journey. Because of his limitless and kindness to all human beings, he had selflessly devoted the next 45 years for teaching. Only during the rainy season, together with his disciples; monks and nuns, they entered the Rain Retreat.

The Buddha (Siddhattha) was born in 563 BCE Through the efforts of the Buddha and his followers. Buddhism was firmly established in India about six centuries before Christianity.

Last instruction of the Buddha

At the age of eighty, while while he was on his way to Kusinara City, the capital of Malla State, the Buddha became ill after eating a meal of tainted food offered by Cunda, a poor tool smith. The Buddha told Venerable Ananda, his faithful attendant to console Cunda because his food-offering, which was the Buddha's last meal, was of great fruit and merit and Cunda was not to blame for the Buddha's illness.

The Buddha walked to the Sala Grove of Malla State where He told the Venerable Ananda to prepare a resting pad between two Sala trees. Then he laid down on his right side still mindful and self-possessed. The monks assembled about him.



Although he was about to pass away when men came to him to be received into the Order. He accepted and gladdened them with a sermon on the Dhamma. Subhadda, a poor mendicant wanderer, was the last ordained by the Buddha, becoming Arahant before the Buddha's death.

On his death bed under the two Sala trees, on the full moon night of Visakha month (May), the Buddha said to his disciples:

“O Bhikkhus. You will not be left without a Teacher, because

the Doctrine and the Discipline I have taught and laid down for you shall be your teacher when I am gone.”

He said again. “Decay is inherent in all conditioned things! O Bhikkhus, work out your own liberation diligently.”

These were the last words of the Enlightened One. His face shone as luminous gold. His mind ascended to the realms of ecstasy. He reached the Nibbana (enlightenment), and passed away from the eyes of human beings forever. After the passing of Lord Buddha, his male and female disciples continued teaching Dhamma to the people and retained the Buddhism until the present time.

Lesson 4

Buddhism After the Buddha's Death

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the events leading up to the Buddhist Councils
2. To teach the student about the Buddha's disciples who helped spread Buddhism in an ancient India
3. To teach the student about the spread of Buddhism to foreign countries after the Buddha died

Consequences :

1. The student can describe the various schools of Buddhism
2. The student can explain how Buddhism evolved into two schools of thought.
3. The student can name the countries which received Buddhism and where it was firmly established.

The Story in Brief

After the Buddha's death, his disciples had spread the Buddhism so far and wide. In the first century of the Buddhist Era, two Buddhist councils were held to protect and preserve the purity of Buddha's teachings.

The First Council

Traditionally, tells us that the First Council was held by 500 Arahants (saints or enlightened persons) at Rajagri (Rajagaha) city three months after the Buddha's death. The purpose of the Council was to record and standardize the doctrines, and maintain monastic disciplines as taught and laid down by the Buddha. The Council was headed by Venerable Maha Kassapa (Kassa yapa) and was sponsored by King Ajatasattu of Magadh State. The council meeting lasted seven months.

The Second Council

A turning point in the history of Buddhism was reached one hundred years after the Buddha's passing. A group of monks called Vajjiputta at the town of Vesali, were lacking in discipline. The elders of the Order tried to correct vajjiputa monks' views and practices, but this advice was ignored. Worse, Vajjiputta monks proposed ten matters to change the rules laid by the Buddha, but the elder monks could not agree with the proposals and wanted to retain what the Buddha laid down. To resolve these issues 700 Arahants held the Second Council at Vesali to revise and confirm the Buddha's Vinaya Rules. Buddhism was divided into two schools of thought: Theravada and Mahayana. The elders of the Council belonged to the Theravada school; the Vajiputta monks left the council and Mahasanghika (Great Community).

The name Mahayana was not known at that time. The Mahayana school was developed later. These two terms, Mahayana and Hinayana, appeared in the Saddharma Pundarika Sutra (the Sutra of the Lotus of the Great Law), between the First Century B.C. and the first Century A.D.

The Third Council

After declining for many years, Buddhism flourished again during the reign of King Ashoka of India (Third Century B.C.). To purge the undisciplined monks and preserve the pure teachings of

the Buddha, the Third Council was held at Pataliputra (now named Patna, Capital of the Bihar State of India). The Council was led by Venerable Moggalliputta Tissa and sponsored by King Ashoka the Great. One thousand Arahants participated in this Council.

After the Council, nine missions of elders were sent sponsored by King Ashoka to preach the Dhamma in the different states of India and abroad and for the first time, Buddhism spread beyond India. Buddhism became one of the five great world religions with Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Presently, there are two traditions of Buddhism, namely:

1. Theravada Buddhism and
2. Mahayana Buddhism

Theravada Buddhism predominates in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Theravada Buddhist practice is spreading in Australia, Europe and North America.

Mahayana Buddhism predominates in North India, Tibet, Mongolia, Russia, China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. This Buddhist practice is also spreading and growing in the West.

Lesson 5

The Buddhist Sects

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the rising of different Buddhist schools of thought
2. To teach the student how Buddhism was divided into two main traditions
3. To teach the student where Buddhism spread and flourished

Consequences :

1. The student can describe the various schools of Buddhism
2. The student can explain how Buddhism evolved into two schools of thought.
3. The student can name the countries which received Buddhism and where it was firmly established.

Buddhist Sects

The division of Buddhism can be traced back to the time of the Second Council, a century after the Buddha's passing. This separation arose from a laxity of discipline and differing interpretation of monastic rules by a group of monks called Vajjiputta at Vesali City. These monks made ten proposals against the Dhamma and the discipline of the Buddha, although the monks believed that their views and practices were in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha.

Another reason for the different schools of Buddhism is due to the different cultures, climates, and conditions of the countries in which Buddhism developed. Some of the rules of early Buddhism could not be followed in all places.

As time went on, the number of Buddhist followers both monks and lay people were increased rapidly. Seven hundred Arahants led by Venerable Yasa Kakandaputta held a meeting, for monks only, at Valikaram Temple in Vesali/Vaisali. This event was regarded as the Second Council.

The meeting dealt with the ten proposals of Vajjiputta monks. The Second Council concluded that the ten proposals were undoubtedly wrong and harmful to the Buddha's teachings. There were other matters in which the elderly monks could not agree. Therefore, the meeting revised and confirmed the Buddha's teachings once again. Meanwhile the Vajjiputta monks formed their own group.

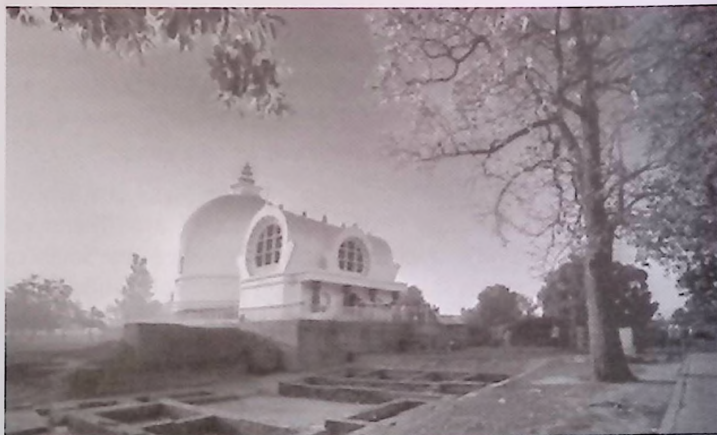
The group of Vajjiputta monks started the Mahayana School, differing from the original Order, called Hinayana or Theravada school. The Theravada tradition, sometimes called the Southern School of Buddhism, is the only surviving school of that tradition. One must remember, however Hinayana interpretations of the words Hinayana and Mahayana. Today it is not considered good form to use the word Hinayana when speaking of the Theravada school.

By the time of King Ashoka the Great, there were eighteen or twenty different schools and many sub-schools arising out of the

Mahayana and Theravada Traditions. Eleven arose out of Hinayana and seven out of Mahayana. None of these minor schools survived for very long. Another form of Buddhism is called Vajrayana or Tantric Practice or the Diamond Vehicle. It is found mostly in Tibet, Bhutan, Ladakh and Assam.

The form of Buddhism which flourished under King Ashoka was Theravada, and this form spread to Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. The other tradition, the Mahayana, spread to Nepal, Tibet, China, Mongolia, The Soviet Union, Vietnam, Korea and Japan. In recent times there have been a number of worldwide Buddhist conferences and dialogues which attempt to emphasize the unity of all the various forms of Buddhism, while retaining their distinctive forms. At the present Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism are spreading in all parts of the world.

About 500 million people believe in Buddhism and follow Buddhist path in their daily life, both Theravada and Mahayana. More and more people in the European and American continents and Australia show increasing interest in Buddhist Teachings and Buddhist Meditation.



Kusinara, India, where the Buddha passed away

Lesson 6

The Three Characteristics of Existence

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the three characteristics of existence according to Buddhism
2. To teach the student about Buddhist understanding of natural phenomena
3. To inculcate Buddhist teaching in the student's mind

Consequences :

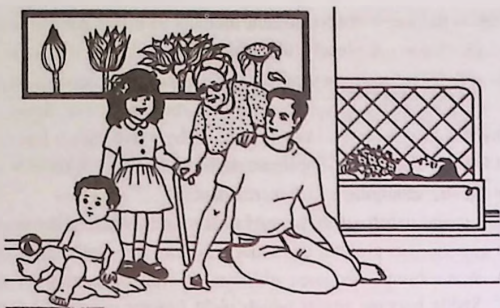
1. The student knows the characteristics of existence according to Buddhism.
2. The student knows about the Buddhist understanding of natural phenomena.
3. The student can explain his or her positive feeling about Buddhism.

Students may want to know what the Buddha taught about natural phenomena of the existence of things. Buddha taught that all living and nonliving things have three unique characteristics. They are as follows :

1. **Anicca Lakkhana** : the characteristic of impermanence
2. **Dukkha Lakkhana** : the characteristic of unsatisfactoriness
3. **Anatta Lakkhana** : selflessness

Anicca Lakkhana

Anicca Lakkhana means the mark of impermanence. Everything is ever-changing, subject to destruction, quite unstable and unreliable. Things are constantly decaying. No matter how much we may try to hold it, no single thing is the same at this present moment as it was one moment ago. For example, when we closely observe and consider the flame of a burning candle, we observe the flame



and its five unique characteristics : momentarily arising, constantly developing, continuing in its normal state, dying down, and dying away. By observing and taking note of these five unique features one can understand that the flame is an impermanent thing. Similarly it could be understood that all things are changing and impermanent.

Dukkha Lakkhana

Dukkha Lakkhana means dissatisfaction experienced by humans and animals, marked by suffering, stress, frustration, pain, illness, unhappiness, instability and so forth. Impermanence is also marked by suffering or dissatisfaction, feared by ignorant people and recognized by wise people as *Saṁsāra vatta*, the cycle of birth and death.

Briefly speaking, there are at least thirteen marks of mundane suffering, namely :

1. Suffering of birth
2. Suffering of decay
3. Suffering of bodily illness
4. Suffering of mental illness
5. Suffering of death
6. Suffering of sorrow
7. Suffering of lamentation
8. Suffering of despair

9. Suffering due to separation from loved ones
10. Suffering due to getting undesirable things
11. Suffering due to non-fulfillment of wishes
12. Suffering due to association with unpleasant people
13. Suffering due to living in bad circumstances

Worldly happiness comes and goes, eventually becoming suffering.

Anatta Lakkhana

Anatta Lakkhana or selflessness is the last common mark of every thing that exists. We cannot find a part in anything which can be called the self. Therefore, there is nothing to possess or control.

Each so-called "being" is composed of five components of existence: body, feeling, perception (memory), mental function and consciousness. No single one of these components can be called the self. Outside of these five factors there is no permanent self. If one removes one factor of these components nothing remains.

All living and nonliving things consist of the four elements of EARTH, WATER, FIRE and WIND. The human body can be further divided into saliva, bones, teeth, nails, hairs, flesh, liver, lungs and so on. If any one of these parts is not functioning in the proper way, neither body nor life can exist. The Buddha realized and taught that only when the three fundamental evils of desire (*Rāga*), hatred (*Dhosa*) and delusion (*Moha*) cease, one is freed from the bondage* of the self or ego**. Then ignorance is destroyed and mind becomes enlightened.

NOTE:

* *Bondage means servant, slavery, the condition of being bound.*

** *Self means I, me, my, such as "I am a rich man, do not tell me that," "She is my friend." "This is mine," etc.*

Lesson 7

The Five Precepts

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the Five Precepts
2. To teach the student about the values of the Five Precepts
3. To teach the student how to observe the Five Precepts
4. To teach the student about the importance of observing the Five Precepts

Consequences :

1. The student can learn and memorize the Five Precepts and learn how to observe them.
2. The student can learn the importance of the Five Precepts.
3. The student can learn and know how the Five Precepts control bodily and verbal actions.
4. The student can explain the importance of observing the Five Precepts.

What are the Five Precepts?

The Five Precepts are commonly known as “*Pancasīla*”. *Pancasīla* are the five rules or qualities used by Buddhist lay people to control verbal actions and to refrain from doing and speaking what is unwholesome and not beneficial. There are various interpretations of the Five Precepts. The Five Precepts are as follows:

1. Abstention from killing or harming living beings
2. Abstention from stealing
3. Abstention from improper sexual conduct and adultery
4. Abstention from telling lies
 - abstention from impolite speech
 - abstention from setting people against each other

- abstention from gossiping
- abstention from backbiting
- abstention from taking intoxicant

5. Abstention from taking intoxicant drinks and harmful drugs.

Of the Five Precepts, the fifth is by far the most important. If a person disregards the fifth precept, he or she can commit many harmful deeds and break the other four precepts easily. A person in control of her / his bodily and verbal actions is a person with **Sīla**, virtue or human living being.

Steps to taking Sīla

There are two ways of taking Pancasial or the Five Precepts. First, you take the precepts that are prescribed for each Sila. This method can be used wherever and whenever there is no monk. Second, you sit respectfully before a monk. Then you must pay respect to him with folded palms and request him to give you **Sīla** as follows :

Mayaṇi Bhante, Visuṇ Visuṇ rakkhanatthāya,

Venerable Sir, we seek from you for careful observance.

Tisaranena saha pañca sīlāni yācāma.

the Five precepts along with the Triple Gems.

Dutiyaṇṇpi, mayaṇi bhante, visuṇ visuṇ rakkhanatthāya,

For the second time, Venerable Sir, we seek from you for careful observance

Tisaranena saha pañca sīlāni yācāma.

the Five precepts along with the Triple Gems.

Tatiyaṇṇpi, mayaṇi bhante, visuṇ visuṇ rakkhanatthāya,

For the third time, Venerable Sir, we seek from you for careful observance

Tisaranena saha pañca sīlāni yācāma.

the Five precepts along with the Triple Gems.

Repeating after him, the monk will say the following passage three times :

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.

*Homage to the Blessed One, the Exalted One,
the Perfectly Self Enlightened One.*

Again you repeat after him the following passage on the acceptance of the Triple Gems as the highest refuge :

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

I go to the Buddha for refuge.

Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchami.

I go to the Dhamma for refuge.

Sangham Saraṇam Gacchami.

I go to the Sangha for refuge.

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ Saraṇam Gacchami.

For the second time, I go to the Buddha for refuge.

Dutiyampi Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchami.

For the second time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge.

Dutiyampi Sangham Saraṇam Gacchami.

For the second time, I go to the Sangha for refuge.

Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ Saraṇam Gacchami.

For the third time, I go to the Buddha for refuge.

Tatiyampi Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchami.

For the third time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge.

Tatīyampi Sangham Saranam Gacchami.

For the third time, I go to the Sangha for refuge.

Completing the above passage, the monk concludes :

Tisaranagamanam Nitthitam

The going for the Triple Gems is complete.

Then you respond thus :

Ama Bhante

So it is, Venerable Sir

Now comes the most important part. You must attentively repeat each Sila after the monk, one by one, as follows :

1. Panatipata, Veramani, Sikkha-Padam, Samadiyami.

I undertake the precept to abstain from killing and harming living beings.

2. Adinnadana, Veramani, Sikkha-Padam, Samadiyami.

I undertake the precept to abstain from stealing.

3. Kamesu, Micchacara, Veramani, Sikkha-Padam, Samadiyami.

I undertake the precept to abstain from adultery and sexual misconduct.

4. Musavada, Veramani, Sikkha-Padam, Samadiyami.

I undertake the precept to abstain from lying and false speech.

5. Surameraya-Majja-Pama-Dat Thanā, Veramani, Sikkha-Padam, Samadiyami.

I undertake the precept to abstain from intoxicating drinks and harmful drugs.

Having finished Pancasila, the monk concludes in Pali. Then you say : *Sādhū Bhante* three times (meanig “very well, Sir”) and prostrate before him three times. The steps of taking Sila are now complete. Keep in mind that the more you can observe Sila, the more happy and peaceful you will be.

Why is it good to take Sila?

Because to take or observe the Precepts is good for all people. It brings peace and happiness to family and community as benefits below;

1. The person with Sila leads a happy life.
2. Nobody hates a person who practice Sila.
3. The person with Sila ia regarded as a complete human being.
4. The person with Sila is a good friend to everyone.

What will happen to the person without Sila?

The people with out Sila cause many problems in society as shown below;

1. One becomes cruel.
2. One may become a criminal.
3. Nobody loves or trusts such a person.
4. One always causes trouble for oneself and others.
5. One is not a good Buddhist.

Good people do not want to associate with such a person.

How to observe Pancasila

For the beginner, there are steps that can be taken:

If you cannot observe all the Sila, then you just choose and observe any one of the five that you can. After some time, increase the number of Silas up to five. If you can not observe Pancasila daily, you can observe one day a week, choosing the day on which you

were born or your family members were born on birthday of your parents.

NOTE: Usually all Buddhists are expected to observe the Five Precepts completely. If all people observed Five Precepts sincerely, families would be peaceful and happy. If the individual family has peace and happiness, society will be peaceful and the world will be a good place to live in.

Lesson 8

The Four Noble Truths

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the basic teaching of the Buddha
2. To teach the student how to scientifically solve his or her problems in daily life
3. To cultivate rational thinking in the student's mind

Consequences :

1. The student able to explain the Four Noble Truths, the basic teaching of the Buddha.
2. The student knows how to find out the causes of the problems and how to solve them scientifically and properly.
3. The student understands the meaning of dissatisfaction, the cause of dissatisfaction and how to stop dissatisfaction.
4. The student can explain the importance of observing the Five Precepts.

Buddhist students may ask, "What is the foundation of Buddhism?" The foundation of Buddhism is the Four Noble Truths. These Truths were explained to the first group of the Buddha's five disciples at Sarnath, near Benares, a city in Northeastern India about 2575 years ago. We now shall study some details of the Four Noble Truths.

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering

Suffering or dissatisfaction on the basic level deals with the problems of daily life such as birth, old age, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation and frustrations of every kind. Getting an undesirable thing is painful, as well as not getting what is desired. People try their best to avoid suffering and to be free from troubles.

This truth treats the problems and problematic situations that are to be observed and comprehended. Without self-investigation we cannot know if these statements are really true! With careful observation in life, we can see that all conditions of life are unstable. Many people who are new to Buddhism, said that Buddhist view is pessimistic religion. No! Buddhist view is neither pessimistic nor optimistic. Buddhist view is realistic view. Buddhism offers opportunity to people to look, analyze, examine and realize the truth of life, the law of natural phenomena. Buddhism gives time to people to see the thing as it really is, as they really are without believing in some one or some things blindly.

2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering

In this Truth, the Buddha explained how suffering arises through various causes and conditions. Every kind of suffering has its origins in craving or selfish desire, which is the result of ignorance or delusion. Sometimes problems happen in your classroom at school. When you try to study, if the room is too noisy or your friends disturb you, you may feel unhappy, you may suffer. Sometimes unjust or unfair events happen that make you feel unhappy or suffer. If you pay attention to your feelings, you will find that calmness, quietness, fair play and peace usually brings happiness.

It can be said that causes of suffering are Hatred, Selfish desire or greedy mind, and ignorance. Suffering or problems in daily life were caused by these three origins or any one of these.

There are three kinds of craving, namely :

- Craving for pleasure
- Craving for existence
- Craving for non-existence or self-annihilation

Our excessive wants and desires are the causes of our problems in daily life.



For example, Mr. Vichai wants to get a car. He works hard and saves his money to buy a car. Then he want a boat, a house and more cars. He must work long hours sometimes 15 or 16 hours each day. He has no time to rest and enjoy his life. He becomes weak and ill. He is suffering. This illustration shows that excessive wants and desires are the cause of problems. Therefore, a lay person should be happy with what he has. This does not mean a lay person should live in poverty, but moderation is suggested in all things.

3. The Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering (problem solving)

The highest goal of Buddhism is to end suffering, greed, hatred and delusion. When craving or “thirst” to posses is completely destroyed, Nirvana, Nibbana, the state of perfect peace will be realized. To end the problems of greed, hatred and delusion, a person

needs to understand, practice and follow the Eightfold Path, the Fourth Noble Truth, given below.

The Four Noble Truth consists of three levels of training namely; moral training, meditation or mind training and wisdom training.

4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Extinction of Suffering

This Truth defines the Buddhist way of life. It contains all the ethical teachings and practices of Buddhism. It provides the way and means to realize the goal set forth in the Third Truth. This way is called the Noble Eightfold Path since it consists of eight factors. It is also known as the Middle Way. They are as follows :

1. Right Understanding,
2. Right Thought,
3. Right Speech,
4. Right Action,
5. Right Livelihood,
6. Right Effort,
7. Right Mindfulness, and
8. Right Concentration.

This Path will be studied in the next lesson. In short, to solve any problem, we have to observe Sila (self control, morality), Samadhi (mind control), and Panna (wisdom) by following the Eightfold Path.

Teachers explain three kinds of craving clearly, giving examples of craving for pleasure, craving for existence and craving for nonexistence. Buddhism teaches us the causes of problems and techniques of problem solving.

Lesson 9

The Middle Way of Life

(Teaching of the Buddha) Part I

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Buddhist way of life
2. To teach the student about loving-kindness and compassion
3. To teach the student the Five Principle of Buddhism

Consequences :

1. The student can understand the meaning of the Middle Way of life.
2. The student develops some ideas about live loving-kindness and compassion.
3. The student can explain the Five Principles of Buddhism.

In this lesson we will study the Buddhist way of life, the Eight-fold Path. This path eliminates our unwholesome thoughts and improper harmful conduct. One can end suffering by understanding, adopting and following the path of the Middle Way, which is a practical way of life. The Middle Way is a path of self-conquest which leads to the ultimate goal, real happiness, perfect peace, Nibbana.

1. Right or Correct Understanding

To begin doing something correctly or solving a problem, we must clear our minds first. Then we must isolate and recognize the problem, comprehend the problem and know the causes of the problem. Right understanding, must, therefore, come first before action. If we do somethings without clear and right understanding we may not success in our work. For example, if we misunderstand the formula of mathematics we will go wrong then get wrong result. Therefore, right understanding and clear mind is needed. That is why the Buddha said that mind training comes first.

To start working upon the Path, we must see our life and the three characteristics of life in general: impermanence, dissatisfaction and selflessness. We must possess a clear understanding of the nature of existence, (or moral laws of human living) and of the factors and component elements which comprise the continuing round of birth and death. This is the first step of the Middle Way.

2. Right or Correct Thought

The mind should be clear of unwholesome thoughts before we act. That way, the mind can be pure and ready for any action or problem solving. Someone have a bad thought their minds were influenced by that thought then they do bad deed get bad and harmful result to public. By this way people get suffering. Therefore, think first before doing any thing.

At a higher level, it means our mind is free from sensory desire, illwill, cruelty, hatred, doubts, worries, tension, anxiety and laziness. At the same time, we should be willing to relinquish anything that obstructs our mental and psychological progress in meditation practice. This is the second step of the Middle Way.

“Clear the mind and be with the present from moment to moment”

3. Right or Correct Speech

Before we practice tranquility meditation, we must clear ourselves by refraining from lying, back-biting, harsh talk and also from idle gossip. We create a connecting link between thought and action or thinking and doing characterized by wisdom and loving-kindness. Correct speech is full of good words, not loud or excited. Correct speech is not prejudiced, or bearing ill-will or selfish interest. Correct speech should not arouse passion or emotions. Correct speech should be lovely, truthful, timely and appropriate to the situation and the audience. This is the third step of the Middle Way.

4. Right or Correct Action

Right Action generally consists of observing the Five Precepts that are the basic principles of the Buddhist way of life. Their positive and negative injunctions are as follows:

1. Not to kill, but to practice loving kindness to all living beings.

2. Not to take what is not given, but to practice charity and generosity

3. Not to misuse the senses, but to practice purity and self-control

4. Not to indulge in lying or harsh speech, but to practice sincerity, honesty and thoughtful speech,

5. Not to take any intoxicating drinks or drugs which will lead to uncontrolled behavior, but to practice restraint and mindfulness.

It is essential that those who aspire to the highest livelife by and practice these principles. If one follows these principles, one's life and work will not harm oneself or others. This is the fourth step of the Middle Way.

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Lesson 10

The Middle Way of Life

(Teaching of the Buddha) Part II

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Right Livelihood according to Buddhist teaching
2. To teach the student about Right Effort
3. To teach the student how to follow the Middle Way
4. To teach the student the three levels of the Eight-fold Path

Consequences :

1. The student can explain the correct meaning of good and bad livelihood.
2. The student can tell Right Effort correctly.
3. The student can explain how to concentrate his or her mind correctly, and how to be mindful while studying.
4. The student can classify Eightfold Path into three levels.

In the last lesson, we studied the first four steps of the Eightfold Path, namely, Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech and Right Action. In this lesson, we will study the second part of the Eightfold Path namely; Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

5. Right or Correct Livelihood.

Right Livelihood deals with occupations which are not harmful to anyone.

The lay Buddhists should avoid from five kinds of trades. They are :-

1. trading in weapons,
2. demeaning people in various ways,

3. trading in liquor,
4. selling poison,
5. Lending money at excessively high interest (usury).

We must consider our responsibilities to ourselves and others when choosing the best way to earn a living.

Buddhists should observe and follow right occupations which exclude the five kinds of work mentioned above. Right Occupation helps one to follow the Five Precepts.

6. Right or Correct Effort.

Trying to be a good child, a good student, to do good and to avoid unwholesome behavior are right efforts in Buddhism. Here we shall study some details of Right Effort which consists of fourfold endeavors.

1. The effort to eliminate unwholesomeness that has already arisen in the mind.
2. The effort to prevent new unwholesomeness in the mind.
3. The effort to cultivate beneficial qualities in the mind.
4. The effort to promote the beneficial quality which have already been cultivated.

For example, students in Buddhist Sunday School try to study Buddhism and Thai Language every Sunday and try to finish their assignments or homework. This is Right Effort.

7. Right or Correct Mindfulness.

Right Mindfulness is the development of awareness in the service of spiritual progress. In simple terms, it means mental training, ability to examine things to recognize what is important and not be led astray into unwholesomeness. Whatever we do we should do mindfully, paying full attention. When you study with full attention, you get good results. If you work mindfully, you will do good work and make few mistakes. Mindfulness is an important instrument of

work. At a higher level, when you meditate, you are aware of all things appearing in the mind. There is also wrong or incorrect mindfulness. Cheating or stealing can be done mindfully, but this is wrong application of mindfulness.

8. Right or Correct Concentration

Right Concentration is the final step of the Eightfold Path, the Middle Way of Buddhism. It means “focusing the mind.” The practice of meditation leads to full understanding of the impermanence of things and eventually to Nibbana.

In simple terms, one must focus within oneself. When you want to do somethings you must concentrate first. Concentrate your mind before and while you study, read or work. You will then get good results. Concentration needs to be practiced again and again.

The Three levels of Eightfold Path

Now we shall describe the Eightfold Path in three levels :

***Sīla* (Moral) level :** Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood.

This is the basic training for lay people.

***Samādhi* (Mind training) level :** Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

This is the middle level of training for those who wish to attain a higher level of mind training.

***Pañña* (Wisdom) level :** Right Understanding, Right Thought.

This is the third level of training for the monastic life and those who wish to attain enlightenment in this very life. It is derives from the second level. One must clear the mind before starting any action. The Eightfold Path can be applied to any kind of work. It is a scientific method of Buddhist mind development.

NOTE : In the classroom, the teacher may divide the students into three groups, representing the three levels of the Eightfold Path. Each group will give an example of the Eightfold Path at their levels.

Lesson 11

Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

Objectives :

1. To teach the student Buddhist meditation
2. To educate the student about the role of meditation in work and study
3. To teach the student what should be done before starting work

Consequences :

1. The student has learned about Buddhist meditation and can tell its meaning clearly.
2. The student clearly explains the role of Buddhist meditation in doing work.
3. The student understands and tell what to do before starting work.

Buddhist Meditation

The following paragraphs are questions and answers about Buddhist meditation. These questions may come. You should know and understand the answers of these questions.

Question : What is Buddhist meditation?

Answer : Buddhist meditation is the way to calm one's mind according to Buddhist teaching. It is single pointedness of mind. It is the way to control one's own mind and to concentrate. It is the way of



purify the mind from unwholesome thoughts such as hatred, selfish desire, greed, ignorance, mental defilement or impurities. In short, meditation is the way to purify one's mind from hatred, greed and ignorance. Meditation is good for all people at all age groups.

Question : Why should we train our minds?

Answer : In Buddhism, the mind is of primary importance. It is the most important element in the human being. All deeds, wholesome or unwholesome, are the result of processes of the mind. That is why the Buddha has repeatedly proclaimed that the mind is the forerunner of all actions, the chief of all things. Therefore, the mind should be trained and refined. Meditation helps in training and refining the mind, it helps the meditator practice mindfulness in all aspects of living. Meditation helps everyone lives and works effectively and successfully. For example, the student needs concentration and full attention, while doing his or her homework to get a good grade. If they do their work without full concentration they will not be able to remember what they did, what they studied.

Question : How many kinds of meditation are there?

Answer : There are two kinds of meditation. **Tranquil Meditation** (Samatha Bhavana) and **Insight Meditation** (Vipassana Bhavana).

Concentration Meditation aims at training single-pointedness of mind. It is done by fixing the mind on a choosen object such as the image of the Buddha or a circular disc painted a particular color. You focus the mind on an object until you remember that object clearly. Then close your eyes slowly and do not think of anything else. Keep your mind on that object until you want to stop meditating. This is the way the mind temporarily becomes calm. Anger, worry, restlessness lust and doubt are temporarily suppressed.

“The well trained mind brings real happiness and permanent peace to the world of beings.”

Insight Meditation is the endeavor to achieve complete insight into the real nature of all phenomena. It is realization of under-

standing things as they really are. The meditator sits for meditation practice, closing his or her eyes, observing his or her breathing-in and breathing-out carefully and slowly. When the mind becomes calm and clear, the meditator may apply a calm and clear mind in observing and contemplating his or her thoughts and feelings. In observing the rising and falling of the breath, one sees the change and impermanence of breath and of life. When the mind sees and understands this, it does not desire to cling or to attach anything. The mind then becomes free from clinging and attachment. This is one way of insight meditation.

Many people practice basic concentration on breathing. One can then observe the moment and see everything as it really is, rising and falling like breath. We may continue our study of insight meditation at a more advanced level later when we go to college.

Transquil meditation helps one achieve wisdom. To get good results in any kind of ordinary or worldly work, one needs concentration and mindfulness. The meditation practitioner needs the guidance and supervision from an experienced and profound teacher to lead him or her in practice.

Question : What would happen if one worked without concentration and mindfulness?

Answer : If one works without concentration and mindfulness, work cannot be perfected. If the student studies without mindfulness and full attention, he or she cannot remember the subject or learn about it and the student receives a bad grade. In the same way, understanding and insight are worldly tools to be used at the start of any work. This is also the role of insight in everyday life.

Question : What are the benefits of meditation?

Answer : The benefits of meditation can be described briefly as follows :

1. It helps to calm our minds. With calm and strong mind we may be able to face all kinds of problems and difficulties in daily life confidently.

2. It helps us to concentrate better by sharpening our mental faculties.

3. It frees us from all kinds of stress, worries and anxieties.

4. It improves our mental and physical health.

5. It helps develop a sound mind and body by cleansing impurities.

6. It cultivates loving-kindness, compassion, inner peace and humility.

It prevents hatred, greed, passion, selfishness, jealousy.

These are the benefits of Buddhist meditation, both in our spiritual life and in worldly endeavors. However, the proper atmosphere, self-confidence, frequency and regularity of practice are all needed to realize the benefits of meditation. More details about meditation can be studied in “the Buddhist Meditation for World Peace” by Ven. Dr. Phangcham, December, 1999, Cape Town, South Africa.



Lesson 12

Three Recollections

Lesson 12.1

Buddhanussati

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the virtues of the Buddha
2. To teach the student the old scrip of Buddhism
3. To educate the student about the doctrines of Buddhism

Consequences :

1. The student can learn the virtues of the Buddha.
2. The student can learn Buddhanussati by heart.
3. The student knows about the doctrines of Buddhism.

What does the **Buddhanussati** mean? **Buddhanussati** means to pay homage to Buddha and recollect his many virtues. The Buddha was the greatest teacher, giving the world a noble religion unequaled in human history. He embodied all virtues, which distinguished him from all other teachers and make him an object of supreme veneration for all beings. Recite the following passages as a means of concentration meditation practice. This kind of practice is called Buddhanussati or Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha. While reciting this, we concentrate on the text and its meaning.

Pali Script	Translation
<i>Itipi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaranasampanno sugato</i>	He is indeed the Exalted One, free from defilements, perfectly self enlightened fully possessed of wisdom and excellent conduct, one who has proceeded by the good way,

<i>lokavidū</i>	knower of the worlds,
<i>Anuttaro purisadham-</i>	excelled trainer of the
<i>Masārathi</i>	trainable man,
<i>Satthā devamanussānaṃ</i>	teacher of deities and men
<i>Buddho</i>	the Awakened One,
<i>Bhagavā ti</i>	the Lord skillful in teaching Dhamma.

How to practice

Rather than worship the Buddha, we pay homage to the Supreme Teacher; we meditate on his virtues, greatness and in remembering this we attempt to strengthen our faith in his teachings. With gratitude and deference we resolve to follow in his footsteps, to enlighten ourselves and render selfless service to others as did the Buddha.

Lesson 12.2 Dhammanussati

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the virtues of the Dhamma
2. To teach the student the old scrip of Buddhism
3. To teach the student about the status of Enlightened One

Consequences :

1. The student can tell the virtues of the Dhamma.
2. The student can learn the old scriptures of Buddhism by heart.
3. The student understands the status of the Enlightened One.

Dhammanussati means “recollection on the virtues of the Dhamma” (the teaching of the Lord Buddha). Though the Buddha in his physical form is no longer with us, we still have the Dhamma as our guide and teacher. Thus the Dhamma has not just taken the place of the Buddha, the Dhamma itself constitutes Buddhahood. And Buddhahood is, in truth, nothing but the Dhamma. Buddhahood is achieved through the realization of the Dhamma. There could never

have been a Buddha without the Dhamma. That is why the Buddha says.

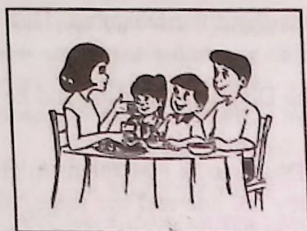
“He who sees the Dhamma, sees me and he who sees me, sees the Dhamma.”

Obviously, the Dhamma is equivalent to Buddhahood for, in the ultimate sense, they are one and the same, like *Buddhanussati*, *Dhammanussati* is recited as a means of concentration meditation practice. The following is the passage under discussion.

Pali Script	Translation
<i>Svākkhāto bhagavatā</i>	Well-expounded is the
<i>Dhammo</i>	Dhamma by the Blessed One
<i>Sandiṭṭhiko</i>	to be realized by one self,
<i>akāliko</i>	with immediate result,
<i>ehiṇṇiko</i>	capable of standing the test,
<i>opanayiko</i>	to be cultivated in one's mind,
<i>paccattaṃ veditabbo</i>	to be attained by the wise,
<i>viññūhī ti</i>	each for himself.

It is clear from the above passage that the Dhamma is something to practice, not merely to study or memorize. To practice the Dhamma is to follow the teaching of the Buddha and to come closer to Buddhahood. Remember that the Dhamma will benefit us only when we practice Dhamma sincerely. The Dhamma will protect only those who practice or follow it sincerely.

All above passages show a scientific way of Buddhist teaching, truths which can be observed by anyone through their own effort at any time anywhere in the world. If you are ill, you have to meet the doctor and take the medicine yourself. If you want to be good, you have to avoid bad action, do good and meditate to purify the mind.



Lesson 12.3

Sanghanussati

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the virtues of the Sangha
2. To teach the student the old scriptures of Buddhism
3. To teach the student the translation of virtues of the Sangha

Consequences :

1. The student can tell the virtues of the Sangha clearly.
2. The student can learn old scriptures of Sanghanussati by heart.
3. The student can translate the virtue of the Sangha into English correctly.

The third of the Three Gems came into being the moment Kondanan (Kontanya) attained the Eye of Truth (He understood the way things really are). Since then the number of disciples continued to grow at a phenomenal rate, helping the Dhamma to spread widely.

The Buddha discovered the Dhamma and taught it to the world, but without the Sangha, his teachings would not have benefited. spread very far or lasted very long, nor could the world today benefit. Besides, without Sangha, who would continue the noble disciples, have realized the Dhamma, remain to instruct others, and help them reach enlightenment, too. As treasurers of the Dhamma, they have studied, practiced, and taught them to others. This is how the tradition is continued.

Sangha, therefore, plays an important role in the preservation and the spread of Buddhism. The fact that we still have access to the Buddha's teaching over 2580 years after his death, is due largely to the efforts and sacrifices of the Sangha.

Sanghanussati means recollection of the virtues of the Sangha (The Holy Order community of noble disciples of the Buddhism). The Pali passage with translation is as follows :

Pali Script	Translation
<i>Supatipanno bhagavato</i>	The order of the Blessed
<i>sāvakaśaṅgho</i>	One's disciples is of good conduct
<i>ujupatipanno bhagavato</i>	The order of the Blessed
<i>sāvakaśaṅgho</i>	One's disciples is of up-right conduct
<i>ñāyapatipanno bhagavato</i>	The order of the Blessed
<i>sāvakaśaṅgho</i>	One's disciples is of dutiful conduct
<i>sāmīcīpatipanno</i>	The order of the Blessed
<i>bhagavato</i>	One's disciples is of proper conduct
<i>sāvakaśaṅgho</i>	This Holy Order,
<i>Yadidaṇ cattāri puri-</i>	namely the four pairs of individual
<i>sayugāni</i>	paths and fruitions
<i>aṭṭha purisapuggalā esa bhagavato sāvaka-</i>	
	That is the Order of the

<i>saṅgho</i>	Blessed One's disciples,
<i>āhuṇeyyo</i>	worthy of gifts,
<i>pāhuṇeyyo</i>	worthy of hospitality,
<i>dakkhiṇeyyo</i>	worthy of offerings,
<i>añjalikaranīyo</i>	worthy of reverential
<i>anuttaraṃ puññakkhet-</i>	salutation, an incomparable field of
<i>taṃ lokassā ti</i>	merit to the world.

We pay respect to the Sangha (the monks) not as a god, but as a member of the noble community of the Buddha's Disciples. We know about the Buddha and his teaching because of the Sangha. Without the Sangha, we could not know the Dhamma because the Sangha has preserved the teachings of the Buddha for over 2580 years. That is why we pay respect to the Sangha. We offer food and whatever is needed for monastic life to the monks who taught and spread Dhamma to the world.

Mindfully breathing in, mindfully breathing out

Buddhaṃ saranuṃ gacchāmi,

Dhammaṃ saranuṃ gacchāmi,

Sanghaṃ saranuṃ gacchāmi.



Lesson 13

Visakha Puja Day

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Visakha Puja Day
2. To teach the student about an importance of Visakha Puja Day
3. To teach the student about Buddhist culture
4. To cultivate morality and virtues in the mind of the student

Consequences :

1. The student can give correct meaning of Visakha Puja.
2. The student knows and understands an importance of Visakha Puja day.
3. The student has learned about Buddhist culture and tradition.
4. The student can explain the three principles of Buddhism correctly.

Visakha Puja Day

Today is Sunday, Thapanee came to Buddhist Sunday school to study Thai and Buddhism. Today, her instructor teaches her and her friends about Visakha Puja Day.

The following is a conversation between Thapanee and her teacher.

Thapanee : “What is Visakha Puja, Sir?”

Teacher : “It means paying homage to the Buddha on the full moon day of Visakha month, the sixth lunar month?”

Thapanee : “Why do we do this Puja, Sir?”

Teacher : “We do this Puja to commemorate the birth of the Buddha, his enlightenment and his passing away on the full moon day of this month. This is why we call this day Visakha Puja Day.”

Thapanee : “Please tell me more, sir.”

Teacher : “It commemorates three events of the Buddha’s own life :

The Buddha was born on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month in the beautiful garden of Lumbini, on the border of Kapilavastu city and Devadaha city near the modern Indo-Nepalese border. The Buddha realized Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month thirty-five years after his birth.



The Buddha passed away on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month under the Sala trees in the forest near Kusinara city, forty-five years after realizing enlightenment, at the age of eighty. These three events happened on the same day. This day is known as the day of coincidence of the Birth, Enlightenment, and Death of the Buddha.”

Thapanee : May I ask you something out of the subject?

Teacher : Surely.

Thapanee : What does the word novice mean sir?

Teacher : The word “Novice” is referred to the young monk who is not fully ordained as a monk and he is not yet twenty years of age, he observe ten precepts. The monk is referred to one who is twenty years of age and got higher ordination from the Sangha, he observes 227 precepts.

Thapanee : Thank you very much, Sir. Then she asked further, in which Countries is Visakha Puja Day observed by Buddhists?

Teacher : Visakha Puja is observed by Buddhists in Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, England, the Soviet Union, North America and South America

Thapanee : What do Buddhists do on Visakha Puja evening, Sir?

Teacher : They assemble on the monastery grounds, bringing with them flowers, lighted candles and incense sticks. They repeat words of homage, which recite by a monk. Then they march in pro-

cession around the Uposatha hall (the Main chapel). They keep their right side towards the hall as a sign of respect and circle the hall three times. While walking, they remember the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. This is what we also do at Wat Dhammaram, the Thai Buddhist Temple of Chicago every year on Visakha Puja Day.

Thapanee : What should we do in daily life as Buddhists, Sir?

Teacher : The Buddha taught us three things namely :

1. Not to do any evil,
2. To do good deeds and help others, and
3. To purify the mind.

These are the basic teachings of the Buddha. We should follow and practice them. We can then, have real happiness. We perform Visakha Puja to remind ourselves of our responsibility to practice these three principles and to be kind to all living beings.

Thapanee : Please give some details of the three Principles of Buddhism.

Teacher : They are as follows : Not to do evil means to abstain from killing, lying, stealing, sexual misconduct and drinking liquor. To do good deeds is to be sincere truthful, honest, mindful and to have loving kindness and compassion. To purify the mind means to train and refine the mind so it may be free from hatred, selfish desire and delusion. We do this by concentration, thinking of goodness and then trying to do good deeds.

Thapanee : Thank you very much, sir.

Teacher : You are welcome.

NOTE : Teacher may prepare and provide study cards about the three events and places where these events happened. A card would be given to each student at random. Each student would be asked to explain their understanding about the places and ideas on the card.

Lesson 14

Asalha Puja Day

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the importance of Asalha Puja Day
2. To teach the student about the first Buddhist monk
3. To teach the student about the principles of the first sermon of the Buddha
4. To teach the student about Buddhist ceremonies on Asalha Puja Day

Consequences :

1. The student has learned about the importance of Asalha Puja Day.
2. The student can remember the name of the first Buddhist monk.
3. The student can tell the principles of the first sermon of the Buddha.
4. The student knows the ceremonies which should be performed on Asalha Puja Day.

Asalha Puja Day and its meaning.

In this lesson we will study Asalha Puja Day and what happened on this day 2588 years ago (2000 C.E.) during the lifetime of Lord Buddha. We will study a conversation between Pauline and her teacher in Wat Dhammaram Sunday School, at the Thai Buddhist Temple of Chicago.

Pauline : What does Asalha Puja mean Sir?

Teacher : Asalha Puja means to pay homage to the Buddha on the full moon day of the 8th lunar month (approximately July). It is one of the Buddhist Holy Days.

Pauline : Where and when is Asalha Puja Day observed Sir?



Teacher : Asalha Puja Day is observed in many Buddhist countries in the world. In Thailand, it was first observed in 2501 B.E (1958 C.E))

Pauline : What occurred on the full moon day of the 8th lunar month Sir?

Teacher : Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon to the five ascetics, namely; *Kondanna, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahanama* and *Assaji* 2588 years ago at Deer Park (Sanath) near Benares city in India.

Pauline : What happened after the first sermon of the Buddha?

Teacher : Kondanna (Gonthanya), the senior ascetic, attained insight into the Truth of life (the Sotapanna level of mind purity), enters the stream of assured enlightenment.

Pauline : What is the principle teaching of the first sermon of the Buddha Sir?

Teacher : The Principles of the first sermon are as follows;

1. Dissatisfaction or Suffering
2. Cause of Dissatisfaction or causes of Suffering
3. Extinction of Dissatisfaction or extinction of causes of suffering and
4. The Path leading to an extinction of the causes of Suffering.

In simple terms, the first sermon concerns itself with the problem of life, the causes of the problem, what needs to be solved and the way to solve it.

Pauline : What happened after the first sermon was finished?

Teacher : As I mentioned earlier, Kondanna, one of five ascetics, attained insight into the Truth of life and entered the stream of enlightenment. Then, he asked the Buddha to ordain him as a Bhikkhu (monk).

Pauline : Did anything else happen on the full moon day of Asalha month?

Teacher : Yes, Pauline, the Buddha delivered the first sermon. The Buddha acquired the first disciple to witness his enlightenment. The Gem of the Sangha first appeared in the world.

Pauline : What do Buddhists do on Asalha Puja Day in Thailand and in other countries?

Teacher : They offer food to the monks, novices and nuns in the morning. In the evening, they give food to the poor and handicapped people, observe the Five Precepts, listen to the Dhamma at monastery, and practice meditation to purify the mind from all unwholesome thoughts. These ceremonies have been observed by Buddhists in Thailand and in many Asian, European and American countries.

Pauline : I've learned a lot today. Thank you very much for your kindness and your time. I have to go home now. My mother is waiting for me. She has to make dinner for us tonight.

Teacher : You're welcome.

Lesson 15

Magha Puja Day

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the importance of Magha Puja Day
2. To teach the student about the events which happen on Magha Puja Day
3. To teach the student the basic principles of Buddhism

Consequences :

1. The student can explain the importance of Magha Puja Day.
2. The student has learned about the importance events which happen on the Magha Puja Day.
3. The student has learned basic principles of the Buddhist teaching.

Fourfold Assembly

There are many important Buddhist Holy Days. These days fall

on the full moon day and 8th day of the waxing and waning moon. They are Visakha Puja Day, Asalha Puja Day and Magha Puja Day. In this lesson, we will study Magha Puja Day

Magha Puja Day takes place on the full moon day of the third lunar month (full moon day of March). This Holy Day commemorates two important events in the life of the Buddha the first occurred early in the Buddha's missionary life.

When the Buddha went to Rajagaha city after the first Rains retreat, 1250 of his disciples, (Arahant) returned from their mission. They met the Buddha there to pay respect to him. They assembled in the Veruvana Monastery (Temple). Two chief disciples of the Buddha, Sariputta and Moggallana, were also there. This assembly is called the Fourfold Assembly because there were four important things about it :

1. All 1,250 monks who attained enlightenment
2. All of them were ordained by the Buddha himself
3. They assembled on their own without being called
4. All of these happened on the full moon day of Magha Masa (March)

Fundamental Principles of Buddhism

The Buddha took this opportunity to proclaim the fundamental principles of Buddhist teachings, as follows :

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>Sabbapapassa Akaranaṃ</i> | Not to do any bad action |
| 2. <i>Kusalassūpasampadā</i> | To do good deeds |
| 3. <i>Sacitta Pariyodapanam</i> | To purify the mind |

This is known as *Ovāda Pātimokkha* (the fundamental principles of Buddhism). If all people were to follow these principles of Buddhism, human beings would have peaceful and happy lives indeed. This first event happened in the early part of the Buddha's mission.

The Great Decision

The second set of event took place in the last year of the second span of the Buddha's life, on the full moon day of the third lunar month (March). The Buddha delivered the second sermon called *Iddhipāda Dhamma*, the Basis of success :

1. Aspiration
2. Effort
3. Thoughtfulness and
4. Investigation.

The Buddha told Venerable Ananda that he had decided to pass away on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month (May), three months later. These two important events occurred on the full moon day of Magha month (late February early March), at Pavā Cetiya, Vesālī, Vaisālī city, northeastern India.

We pay homage to the Three Treasures of Buddhism; the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha on the full moon day of Magha month. It is, therefore, called Magha Pūjā. The Buddhists all over the world observed this Holy Day.

Activities

In the morning, people offer food to the monks and many making good deeds engaging in making merit on a grade scale. In the afternoon, they give food to poor and handicapped people. Then they go to the monastery to observe the Five Precepts and listen to a sermon. In the evenings everyone participates in the Candlelight ceremony. They assemble on the monastery grounds with flowers, incense sticks and lighted candles in their hands.

They walk completely around the Main Chapel where the images of the Buddha is located keeping their right sides towards the Main Chapel as a sign of respect. They do this three times. As they walk they remember the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha and pay respect to them. They also respect fully com-

memorate *Iddhipāda Dhamma* Sermon and the *Parinibbāna* decision by Lord Buddha as revealed above.

We should pay respect to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. We should also practice and follow the three principles of Buddhism :

1. Not to do any bad deeds
2. To do good and
3. To cleanse the mind of impurities.



Lesson 16

Kathina and Loy Krathong Festival in Thailand

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Buddhist rains retreat and culture
2. To teach the students about Kathina and Loy Krathong Festival
3. To teach the students about the purposes of the Loy Krathong Festivals.

Consequences :

1. The student knows and understands the meaning of the rains retreat and Buddhist culture.
2. The student knows and understands the meaning of the Kathina and Loy Krathong Festivals.
3. The student can explain the purposes of the Loy Krathong Festivals.

Kathina (Kathin) and its Meaning

When Buddhism was first established, there were few monks and nuns. Monks did not stay in any particular place. Most of the time, they moved around it was their mission to spread the teachings of the Buddha for the happiness and welfare of everyone.

During the rainy season, when the country experienced heavy and frequent rainfalls, their travels were often impeded and interrupted. In this season, the farmers also cultivated their land and grew crops.

The Buddha allowed his disciples to stay in a specific place temporarily and to stop wandering during the rainy season. It was called *Vassa* or "Rains Retreat". It begins on the 15th day of the Waxing Moon of the 8th Lunar Month and ends on the first Lunar Month (approximately July through October). All Buddhist monks and fully ordained nuns in all parts of the world observe the Rains Retreat during this period, though in certain countries the custom has been modified.

Southeast Asia, at the end of Rains Retreat observance, there is a very grand festival. People offer food to the monks in various monasteries. They also prepare special yellow robes that are offered to the Sangha. This special offering is called the Kathin Offering Ceremony. It is done



only during the period of time starting from the end of rains retreat to the first day of the Waning Moon of the 12th Lunar Month.

Loy Krathong Festival

At the end of the Kathin Festival season, when the rivers and canals are full of water, the Loy Krathong Festival takes place all over Thailand on the full moon night of the Twelfth Lunar Moon. Those who participate in this festival bring bowls made of leaves (which contain flowers), candles, incense sticks, some food and coins to the waterside. The leaf receptacle is called "Krathong".

Each person lights candles and incense sticks and puts them in his or her Krathong, makes a wish and floats the Krathong gently on the surface of the water. Loy Krathong was meant pay homage to the



Holy Footprint of the Buddha on the beach of the *Nammada* River in India. It was originally a Brahmanical rite where by Hindus gave thanks to the Mother (goddess) of the Ganges River which is the treasure of India.

The Thai literature of the Sukhothai period said that Nang Nopbamas, a virtuous lady in the court of King Ruang, was skilled in the art of making beautiful Krathongs. The season of Loy Krathong has an important religious aspects and also develops artistic crafts and social bonding. It offers a good opportunity for people from different areas to meet one another. These festivals have been observed ever since the Sukhothai period.

Lesson 17

Songkran Festival

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Thai Buddhist Tradition
2. To educate the students about Thai Buddhist culture
3. To encourage the students to preserve Thai Buddhist culture and tradition
4. To teach the student about activities performed on Songkran Day

Consequences :

1. The student has knowledge about Songkran Festival Day
2. The student knows and understands Thai Buddhist traditions
3. The student develops the idea of what should be done to preserve Thai culture.
4. The student knows about activities performed on Songkran Festival Day.

The Songkran Festival

Today is April 13. It is summer in Thailand and the spring in the United States of America.

“Today” Sathit said, “I got up early in the morning my parents and I went to Wat Dhammaram. Many monks are outside the temple. They are holding black bowls. They are standing and walking in a line. My parents and other people are standing in front of the monks and Putting food in their bowls. Jenny and Vichai are talking.

Jenny : Do you see many monks?

Vichai : Yes, I do.

Jenny : Are there many people, too?

Vichai : Yes, there are.

Jenny : What are they doing?

Vichai : They are giving food to the monks.

Jenny : Are you giving food to the monks?

Vichai : No, but my parents and sisters are giving food.

Jenny : Do these people give food to the monks every day?

Vichai : Some of them do, but many don't.

Jenny : Why do so many people give food to the monks today?

Vichai : Today is April 13th, Songkran Day. It is the Thai New Year's Day, too. In Thailand, people go to the temples and offer food to the monks, novices and nuns. They give food to handicapped people too.

Jenny : What does everyone do after lunch?

Vichai : They sprinkle drops of fragrant water on the statue of the Buddha and on the monks and novices out of respect. The monks bless them in return.

Jenny : What do children do for their parents and elders?

Vichai : They give small presents to them and sprinkle their

hands with a few drops of perfumed water as a symbol of their love and respect. Their parents or elders will bless them in return.

Jenny : What did everyone do the day before Songkran Day?

Vichai : They cleaned their houses and washed their clothes. They prepared food to give to the monks this morning.

Jenny : What do they do in Thailand on Songkran Day?

Vichai : They do many of the same things as we do here, in Chicago, people in all parts of Thailand, especially in the country areas, clean their houses and the village roads. They enjoy sprinkling perfumed water on the monks, novices and each other for two or three days or even longer.

Jenny : Is school closed on Songkran Day in Thailand?

Vichai : Yes, it is. Songkran Day is a public holiday in Thailand, because it is traditional New Year's Day there.

Jenny : Well, then Happy New Year to you, Vichai!

Vichai : Happy New Year to you, too!

Jenny : After giving food to the monks, what do the people do at their temples in United State of America?

Vichai : They observe the Five Precepts and listen to Dhamma talks. They also donate money to the temple.

Jenny : What is a Dhamma talk and who gives Dhamma talks?

Vichai : A Dhamma talk is discussion about the teaching of the Buddha. The monks give Dhamma talks to lay people, so that the Buddha's teaching can be presented in those people who lived Dhamma. We will ask our teacher at Buddhist Sunday School about this next time. Now, we have to go inside.

Lesson 18

Relationship between Temple and Community

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the role of Buddhist monks in Thailand society
2. To educate the students about the relationship between temple (monasteries) and the Thai communities
3. To educate the student about influence of Buddhism in Thai society
4. To teach the student about the devotion to the Buddha in the world

Consequences :

1. The student has studied about the role of Buddhist monks in rural and national development in Thailand.
2. The student knows and understands the relationship between the monasteries and Thai communities.
3. The student knows about the creative influence of Buddhism in Thai society.
4. The student knows about devotion to the Buddha practiced World Wide.

Case in the East

The relationship between the Buddhist temple and the lay community in Thailand was established at least 2,294 years ago (1999). Wherever Thai Buddhists settled down, they established a monastery as the center of their community, even in foreign lands. Thai's deeply believe in Buddhism and practice it in their daily lives as same as Cambodian Buddhists and Lao Buddhists do in the USA. In Thailand, monks play an important role in the rites and celebrations of the people at times of birth, marriage and death.

Temporary Ordination

In Thailand, the people invite Buddhist monks to participate in all sorts of ceremonies, to make the occasion more auspicious. Besides preaching, monks often do volunteer work in community construction and develop close contact with villagers in the rural areas. It is a Thai custom for Buddhist males over twenty years of age to be temporarily ordained as Buddhist monks, generally during the Annual Rains Retreat. During this three months period, they were trained in Buddha Dhamma and meditation practice. After that period they may become layman again and bring with them Buddhist doctrines and certain disciplines to practice in daily life, they may run their families in peaceful happy way. Some women become lay nuns on a temporary or permanent basis.

Role of Monastery

In rural Thailand most primary schools are located in the monastery's compound. Monks teach in many schools in Thailand, like missionary schools in Europe and America. In the monastery's compound, there is a Dhamma Hall, or "Sala". It is available for all sorts of village activities. The Sala has served as the village hotel for travelers, as a public meeting hall or as a school. There is at present much connection between temples and the wider communities. In big cities and towns, school students of all ages who cannot get accommodations generally stay in the monasteries at no cost until they complete their studies. This practice is hard to find in the West.

The monastery is an information center, a community and recreation center, and refuge for the mentally disturbed and aged. Many village boys and girls learn the rudiments of reading and writing Thai, basic arithmetic and Buddhist precepts from the monks. The monastery grounds are usually the most natural location for cultural programs, for lectures and for polling booths to be set up for political elections.

As Lay People

On the 8th and 15th of the waxing and waning moon of the lunar month, Buddhists go to the monastery and offer food to the monks, novices and lay nuns. After that some lay people observe the Five Precepts and Eight Precepts, practice meditation and stay overnight in the Dhamma Hall in the monasteries, they offer food to the monks in the next morning then go home. The 8th and 15th days of the lunar month are called "*Wanphra*".

In the West

In The United States of America, there are at least 94 Thai Buddhist Temples, out of these, seven of them run Sunday Schools to teach the students Thai Language, Thai culture and basic Buddhism. Monks and lay Buddhists teach these courses. These Buddhist temples also serve as community centers.

Let us look at the activities of three Buddhist temples in the US. Wat Dhammaram, in Chicago, Illinois, 1976, serves as a community center both for Thais and for non-Thais in the community. The Buddhist Council of the Midwest, America Buddhist Congress, Homeowners Association of Nottingham Park, Thai-Illinois Project, all meet there. The first International Visakha Celebration was held and hosted by this temple in 1985, under the leadership of *Venerable Phra Phrohmmavachirayan Maha Thera (Prasith Sitthipanth)*.

Wat Dhammaram was co-sponsor of a Parliament of World Religions, 1993 a centennare of a Parliament of World Religions 1893 holed in Chicago last 100 years ago. The Temple is an educational center for students from different schools, colleges and universities in the Chicago area. The monastery provides meditation retreats and training programs for Thais and non-Thai alike. Wat Dhammaram now, 2001, being a host of annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of a Parliament of World Religions CPWR, one a year, (around early June of the year). Wat Dhammaram works with interfaith organizations in Chicago and surrounding areas. Wat Dhammaram is main

Theravada Buddhist training Center in Midwest area of the USA.

Wat Thai of Los Angeles known as Wat Thai LA. (1971, 8225 Coldwater Canyon, North Hollywood, California. 91605-1198, 818-780-4200, Fax 818-780-0616. Email: watthai@watthai.org)

Wat Thai LA, the first Thai Buddhist Temple in the United States of America, also serves as a community center for people from all walks of life. Employment Training Center was established in 1988, in this temple. The committees come from people from all ethnic backgrounds, this body was established on a cooperative effort between the temple and the city. Relationship between Thai Temple and local communities are being developed and expanded throughout the United State of America. Wat Thai of Los Angeles, California, works closely with Buddhist Council of Southern California and other interfaith activities in the West coast areas.

Hsi Lai Temple of California 1991, Chinese Buddhist Temple.

Hsi Lai Temple was established in response to the needs of local Buddhist practitioners, to promote Humanistic Buddhism, to build a Buddha's Light of Pure Land, to purify the human mind and society and to realize world peace. Therefore, the International Light International Association was officially inaugurated in Los Angeles, California on May 16, 1992. The Temple, now, has more than 15 chapters in all over the world, namely; Asia, Europe, North and South America, Affrica, Australia, New Zealand. Hsi Lai Temple is now a place for Hsi Lai University, providing Buddhist studies, meditation and Asian cultural studies to people from all walks of life.

Wat Thai Washington, D.C. known as Wat Thai, D.C., (13440 Layhill Rd. Silver Spring, MD 20906; Phone 301871-8660; Fax 391-871-5007, Email: watthai@iirt.net; www.watthaidc.org, established in 1974) serves as Buddhist, Meditation, Eastern and Thai Cultural, Coordination and Educational Center.

Wat Thai Washington closely works with deferent religious organizations in Washington metre and surrounding areas. It is very good example for the other Thai Buddhist communities in the United

States of America, the Wat Thai Washington, D.C. provides facilities to local communities by sharing parking lot to neighbouring school and friends. The Temple provides computer training program for the Thai Monks working in Thai Temples in all parts of the United.

Conclusion

The Buddha, after his enlightenment, taught, helped, and guided people to know and understand the truth, the real happiness and the way leading to a noble life. Above all, Because of his perfect purity, wisdom, loving kindness and universal compassion, he devoted his life to the happiness of humankind in all communities.

Buddhist monasteries have been establishing to serve all groups of people without restriction and condition. Therefore, the people support and maintain the monasteries as well as the Buddha's teachings, the Dhamma.



Main Buddha Hall, Wat Thai Washington DC

Lesson 19

A Good Child

Objectives :

1. To teach the student how to respect his/her parents and how to behave with others
2. To cultivate good character in the mind of the student
3. To teach the student how to become familiar with the monks and nuns and also how to respect and behave towards them

Consequences :

1. The student has learned how to respect his/her parents and others.
2. The student expresses his/her gratitude towards others.
3. The student can tell about the monks and nuns and how to respect and behave towards them in the proper way.

Today is Sunday. June to Buddhist Sunday School at **Wat Dhammaram**. June studies the Thai Language, culture and Buddhism at Buddhist Sunday School. June is a very good student. When she studies, she usually pays full attention to the class., June has a good friend, his name is Preecha. June and Preecha study in the same class at Buddhist Sunday school. Their houses are not far from Wat Dhammaram. Their parents take them there at least twice a week.

One day after class was over, June and Preecha went to ask a monk about the life of the Buddha. The monk said "Oh, my dear students, you are good students," June and Preecha said, "Thank you sir." "How did you know sir?" "I know from your parents. They told me that on Saturday you get up early to help your parents clean your bedroom, wash clothes, set the dining table".

After eating breakfast, you do your homework. Your parents are very happy with that. They are very glad to have good children.

You also are diligent students, who work and study hard. I have seen reports from your school that your mother showed me last week. They reflect good character, good behavior, sincere study habits, and full attention in class, I am happy with both of you.”

“O.K., before you go home,” the monk went on “I would like to add some words of the Buddha. He taught us that a good child should love and respect his parents as creators, because they gave him/her life and introduced him/her to the world. He should be obedient and never argue in an insolent manner.

If the young people wants to make his/her point clear, he/she should be so in a respectful manner. He/she should know that his/her parents love him/her dearly and sacrifice much for him/her and his/her overall progress in life. He/she should try him/her best to return their love with a grateful attitude towards them. He/she should obediently fulfill all their requirements.”

“He/she also should respect the monk and support his/her religion and culture. A good child is not selfish, but socially, kind to all people and does not harm any living being. He/she speaks lovingly and kindly to everyone.” The monk said, “This is enough for you today. It is now five p.m., it’s time to go back home.”

June and Preecha said, “Thank you very much, sir”, then paid respect and say good-bye to him.

“To Be Grateful To The Parents Is a Symbol of a Noble One.”

“*Nimittam Sādhurūpānam Katanññakataveditā*” (Buddha’s Words)

Lesson 20

The Duties in Society

Objectives :

1. To teach the student how to practice or follow Buddhism
2. To educate the student about the duties of children in taking care of their parents
3. To educate the student about gratitude towards the parents
4. To teach the student how much our parents and teachers care for him/her

Consequences :

1. The student can tell the difference between Hindu and Buddhist practice and believe.
2. The student knows about his/her duties to perform to the parents and care for them.
3. The student has learned to utilize Buddhist practice in every day living.
4. The student shows gratitude towards parents and teachers nicely.

- Part I -

According to Hindu belief, the Sun, the Moon, the rivers, the mountains and big trees can be all the source of blessings. Hindu's worship these natural things, because they believe that God (or Brahma) created all things. Hindu people still worship this way.

When Lord Buddha was staying at a Bamboo Grove (known as Veruvana Mahavihara, near the city of Rajagriha) he met with Sigala. This young man was worshipping the four directions, (North, South, East, West) then looking above and then down.

Buddha : Why do you perform these ceremonies?

Sigala : I perform these ceremonies to honor and keep the sacred words of my father told me before he died. If I do these things, I shall receive blessings from God.

Buddha : You do well, Sigala. But I think you do not understand the ceremony. It is your duty to protect your home, your wife, your children and prevent them from doing wrong. I love you like a father. I will explain to you the meaning of the six directions in our teaching.

Father and mother are the East. Teachers are the South.

Wife and children are the West. Friends and kin are the North.

Colleagues and employees or workers are the direction below.

Monks and nuns are the direction above.

Singala : Please give me more sir.

Buddha : Singala, the East refers to our parents they gave us our lives, looked after us and brought us up. Our parents also restrain us from wrong ways, encourage us to do good, give us education and pass down their wealth to us at the right time. We, as their children help look after their affairs and maintain the line age and tradition of our family. We should be worthy of their heritage. When they die we should perform the merit for the deceased in their names.

Singala, the South refers to the teacher. Students serve the teacher in five ways : stand up to receive him/her when he/she enters classroom, attend to the teacher's needs in his/her room, pay full attention to what is taught, learning arts and sciences from him/her with a respectful attitude, offer him/her personal service.

When the teacher is attended to in these ways, the teacher should then help students in the following ways :

1. Train them in what the teacher knows, train and advise them in what they ought to do.
2. Teach them carefully what they ought to know.
3. Tell them everything about the subjects under discussion without keeping secrets.
4. Praise them among friends.

Provide for their security in all occasions, so that, they will always be looked after wherever they go Sigala these two directions should be taken care by the heads of Families. then the Blessing and happiness would be theirs.

Sigala : Thank You very much sir. I appreciate your teaching very much.

Lesson 21

The Duties in Society

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the characteristics of good wife and good husband
2. To teach the student characteristics of a good friend
3. To teach the student the characteristics and responsibility of both working people and their employers
4. To teach the student the duty of the monks, nuns and lay Buddhists.

Consequences :

1. The student has learned the characteristics of a good wife, a good husband, and a good friends.
2. The student can explain the reciprocal duties of working people and their employers.
3. The student has learned the reciprocal duties of monks, nuns and lay Buddhists.

If you don't mind, please explain the rest of them to me.

Buddha : I will, Sigala.

- Part II -

In the Six Directions (Duties in Society) Part I, we studied about parents signifying the Eastern Direction and teachers being the Southern Direction, which the Buddha explained to Sigala, a Young

householder in the city of Rajagriha, the capital of Magadh, an ancient kingdom of India.

In this section, we shall study about the remaining duties to each other (called direction to be honored, in the time of the Buddha); behind signifying wife; left signifying friends; downwards signifying working people and employers and upwards signifying monks, nuns and religious teachers.

Today's Western culture emphasizes individual independence over sharing, cooperation and mutual responsibility. This attitude is reflected in current male/female relationships and employee/employer relationships. The Buddha's guidelines may be adapted to 20th century American culture. The Buddha explained to Sigala that one's wife should be respected in the following ways:

1. Praise her and pay due respect to her;
2. Do not despise or look down upon her;
3. Be faithful to her;
4. Honor her and share household affairs;
5. Present her with dresses and Ornament, if possible.

The wife's duties include :

1. Performing household duties to the best of her ability;
2. Providing hospitality to relatives and friends of her husband;
3. Being faithful to her husband;
4. Paying full attention to all her duties and responsibilities;
5. Looking after valuables and family property

Buddha : My dear Sigala, any husband or wife lacking these virtues, will not be happy in family life. Do you understand, Sigala?

Sigala : Very well sir, it is an excellent explanation. I'm very happy.

Buddha : Sigala, friends should be good and sincere to each

other. I shall characterize good friends. They share things, speak kindly and pleasantly to each other and offer help and protection when needed. They have a good attitude and should not be impulsive towards others.

Friends are truthful a reliable and stand by each other in times of Danger. Good friends guide their friends to avoid harmful drugs, smoking and intoxicating drinks. As a good friend, the student should learn these virtues in order to be happy.

The next instruction concerns. Working people. Employers have the following duties :

1. Assign work suitable to the skill and strength of the workers.
2. Care for them and provide means to keep them healthy.
3. Grant them an occasional vacation.
4. Provide them education to up grade their knowledge and skill to improve their work and production.

Sigala, working people have the following duties ;

1. Start work on time and complete work on time
2. Be sincere in all endeavors
3. Constantly strive to improve their work and loyal to their
4. Praise and honor employer and remain loyal to them.

Without these virtues work can not be done properly.

Sigala, the last advice is about monks, nuns and religious teachers, to whom lay people respect and honor. They serve people in many ways without even thinking of reward.

True nuns, monks and religious teachers protect people from unwholesome ways and guide them to do good. They help people develop compassionate minds, tell them new things, help them clear their minds and guide them to a happy and peaceful life.

Sigala, people should support monks and religious teachers in the following ways :

1. Help them material needs and treat them by doing good deeds
2. Speak to them kindly
3. Think of them kindly
4. Welcome them to your families
5. Provide them with food so they may pursue monastic life comfortably.

These are the duties of lay people. If they follow these ways, they will be happy. In this manner we can understand and maintain the Dhamma. How do you feel about these things Sigala?

Sigala : Very good sir.

Sigala thanked the Buddha and went home happily. The Buddha went back to Veruvan Mahavihara to teach another group of people.

Lesson 22

Buddhism and Women

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Buddhist ideas help women in the time of the Buddha
2. To teach the student how Buddhist religion was opened to women at the time of Braminic cast system was very strong

Consequences :

1. The student has learned about Buddhist ideas and attitudes towards women.
2. The student can give his or her opinion about Buddhist religion giving equal opportunity to women during the time of the Buddha.

Idea of Equanimity

In India, Hindus believe that man will be good or bad depending upon his birth and his family. By birth one maybe of low caste or a

Brahmin. Only Brahmins may study and attain the highest wisdom. Low caste people cannot do so. The Buddha labored very I wisely and, to some degree, effectively to eradicate this idea, as well as other social evils that prevailing in His day. He spoke strongly against the caste system, because it blocked the human progress.

The Buddha spread the idea of brotherhood, equality, spiritual liberation, freedom and the ways to experience enlightenment here and now Religion for all.

Before the advent of Buddhism, women were often in unfavorable circumstances. This new Order was a great blessing. Queens, Princesses, daughters of noble and ordinary families, widows, bereaved mothers, helpless women and former prostitutes all enjoyed perfect happiness and peace in Buddhism. Many gained liberation by seeking refuge in Buddhism. When bereaved or hopeless woman came to the Buddha, he greeted them by saying "My sister" or "My sisters." (In Pali word "Paginī") The Buddha was the first major religious leader in history to honor women and helped open their eyes to the world of Truth.

Most Beautiful Lady

Two Arahants, Sariputta and Moggallana, were made the two chief male disciples in the Order of Bhikkhus. The Arahantees Khema and Uppalavanna were made the two chief female disciples in the Order of Bhikkhunis.

Visakha Maha-upasika a wealthy and most beautiful lady devoted her life to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. She spread the light of Buddha's Teachings throughout a time of herself to different groups of women.

Many other female disciples were recognized by the Buddha himself as distinguished, devoted and able followers. Many were intellectuals, counselors and meditation teachers. They also helped spread the words of the Buddha commented many women and their families throughout India and Asia.

As Missionary

Sanghamitta Theree was a daughter of King Ashoka the Great of India. She was granted higher ordination into the Bhikkhuni's Order about 230 years after the death of the Buddha. She and Mahintra Thera were sent to Ceylon, (Sri Lanka) bringing with them a Bodhi Tree which they planted there.

Buddhism has flourished in Sri Lanka since then. To this day many women in all parts of the world have become Buddhists and want to get Higher Ordination. They study the Dhamma, practice the Dhamma and teaching the Dhamma to people from all walks of life with great devotion.

Lesson 23

The Basic for Success

(Iddhipada)

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about the path of accomplishment and the basis for success in work
2. To teach the student practical ideas of Buddhism
3. To cultivate the Four Virtues in the mind of the student

Consequences :

1. The student can clearly explain the Four Virtues for success.
2. The student has understood the practical ideas of Buddhism.
3. The student can express his or her feeling about the virtues of Buddhism.

Iddhipada

In life, everyone wants to succeed at work. Successful people are recognized and respected. The stories of their lives are studied by both their contemporaries and by later generations. Successful individuals are sources of creative inspiration for those who want to succeed

themselves. Let us study about the basis of success according to Buddhism.

The Buddha taught us how to succeed in many of his sermons. "Iddhipada" is a sermon, which explains Four Virtues. When developed these lead to success and enable one to achieve goals in life. They are Good will (Chanda), Effort (Viriya), Thoughtfulness (Citta), and Investigation (Vimamsa).



The first virtue is will or inspiration. To be happy to work and ready to work at one's best ability, one should resolve in hand at mind to work properly. Without good will, inspiration, good intention, nothing can be accomplished.

The second virtue is application of effort in to one's undertakings. It takes ceaseless application of energy to finish work as one wants.

When you have assignments to do, exert yourself fully and continually to complete the work. Work, however, without worry and strain; work with balanced effort. Poverty and ignorance can be defeated by effort and endeavor. Effort, therefore, is very important for success and should be cultivated in our minds.

The third virtue is mindfulness. Pay full attention to what you do. Whatever we do, be it great or small, we must apply mindfulness and active thought to it again and again, until we are done. If we do not succeed at first, we try again with endeavor and mindfulness and work hard.

The fourth virtue is investigation or examination. Without investigation, work may not be completed perfectly. Investigation and examination should be done carefully. It is wisdom applied to all kinds of work. When we work we should always examine the work we do. A good understanding of the work should be kept in mind.

As Missionary

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The fourth virtue is investigation or examination. Without investigation, work may not be completed perfectly. Investigation and examination should be done carefully. It is wisdom applied to all kinds of work. When we work we should always examine the work we do. A good understanding of the work should be kept in mind.

To work hard is not enough. We should also work done wisely and intelligently will ensure success.

Iddhipada, while gave us the four Virtues, gave us an important road to success in our lives. That is why we should study it, understand it and apply its principles.

“Without commitment your chance of success is very slim indeed”.

Lesson 24

Blessing Discourse (Mangala Sutta)

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Buddhist ideas of blessing
2. To educate the student about rational ideas in Buddhism
3. To teach the student about correct action according to Buddhism

Consequences :

4. The student has studied the Buddhist ideas of Blessing.
5. The student knows exactly what the Buddha taught about real blessings.
6. The student can explain simple blessings and beneficial action in Buddhism.

When the Buddha lived at Jetavana Maha Vihara (Jeta Grove), in Sarvatthi, different people had different opinions about which Blessing or Mangala, was the most beneficial. Discussion was going on and they could not agree. The argument continued on into the night. Finally they lit lamps and went to see the Buddha. They reviewed the discussion and asked for his wisdom. The Buddha then described true Blessings or Mangala.

Blessings in life from our own actions rather than from external factors. If we want prosperity, blessings and happiness, we have to work things out for ourselves. For example, the student who wants to get a good grade will have to study hard, sincerely, intelligently and wisely.

The blessings enunciated in the “Mangala Sutta” are thirty-eight in number, starting from the most fundamental and culminating in the highest spiritual attainment which is the realization of Nibbana or Enlightenment.

1. Not to associate with evil people,
2. To associate with wise people,
3. To honor those who are worthy of honor,

These are the highest blessing.

4. To reside in a good location possessing a favorable environment,
5. To have done meritorious deeds,
6. To set oneself on the right course,

These are the highest blessing.

7. To have vast learning and experience,
8. To have skills in arts and handicraft,
9. To be disciplined,
10. To be well trained,
11. To have pleasant speech and talk,

These are the highest blessings.

12. To support and provide for one's parents,
13. To cherish spouse and children,
14. To be in an correct occupation and right action,

These are the highest blessings.

15. To be liberal and generous,
16. To conduct oneself correctly,
17. To support one's relatives,
18. To be blameless in action,

These are the highest blessings.

19. To refrain from doing bad things,
20. To keep oneself away from intoxication by self control,
21. To be careful in all actions,

These are the highest blessings.

22. To show reverence to the Buddha, his teachings, his monks, parents and elders,
23. To be humble,
24. To be content,
25. To show gratitude,
26. To hear the Buddha's teaching regularly,

These are the highest blessings.

27. To be patient and forbear (to physical and mental dissatisfaction, pain etc.),
28. To be obedient wisely,
29. To see the Samanas (holy person)
30. To discuss the Dhamma at the proper time.

These are the highest Blessings.

31. To have self control,
32. To lead a holy life,
33. To see the Noble Truths,

34. To realize Nibbana, or Enlightenment,

These are the highest Blessings.

35. To have one's mind not unshaken by the Eight Worldly Conditions*,

36. To be without sorrows,

37. To live without stress,

38. To be secure.

These are the highest Blessings.

The Buddha finished his talk. The listeners appreciated the Buddha's talk very much. They thanked the buddha and went home happily.

These are the highest Blessings in Buddhism. These blessing secular a practical way of life. The Budhha gave these ideas to people to follow instead of worshipping supernatural powers or superstitions outside oneself.

NOTE : This lesson may be studied over two sessions, from Blessing No.1 to Blessing No.10, for first session and from Blessing No.11 to Blessing No.20 for second session, from Blessing No.21 to Blessing No.38 for third session or whether teacher finds suitable. The teacher should find example to illustrate each Blessing rationally.

Lesson 25

Causes of Ruin

Objectives :

1. To teach the student the four causes of ruin and despair and how to avoid them
2. To teach the student what will happen if people practice four cause of ruin
3. To teach the student the ways of progress according to Buddhism

Consequences :

1. The student has learned about the causes of ruin.
2. The student has learned about the practical Buddhist teaching.
3. The student can explain the results of sexual misconduct, drunkenness, the use of harmful drugs, habitual gambling and association with bad freinds.

Cause of Ruin

Most people want to progress in their lives. However, some follow a path to ruin. This results in trouble and suffering. Many things cause ruin in daily life, such as addiction to liquor and harmful drugs, roaming the streets at improper hours, association with bad companions, idleness and so on. People who want to live peacefully in society need to avoid these causes of unhappiness. Let us study four causes of ruin.

1. Adultery and sexual misconduct.

A man or woman should be sincere to everyone, especially the opposite sex. One should abstain from sexual misconduct which harms oneself and others. A man should honor and respect women as same as he respects his mother and his sister. Basically, he should be honest.

If a man habitually misleads women, he will not be happy in society. No one respects him, no one honors him, no one trusts him and no one loves him. He is known as a man of deception. On the other hand, women should respect men in the same way, out of compassion and wisdom. When one is sincere to his/her spouse, family will be peaceful and happy.



2. Drunkenness and addiction

Addiction to of liquors, drugs, and tobacco causes carelessness, improper actions and misery to oneself and others. One can ruin oneself and any chance of a harmonious family life.

One should take care not to take intoxicating drinks. Drunkenness and drug addiction harm and disturb the person physically and mentally. One may suffer by having ill health and perhaps cause an early death. Addicted to smoking can do the same thing.

Question : What happens if one becomes drunk or takes illegal drugs?

Answer : There are six undesirable effects:

1. Loss of wealth
2. Increase of quarrels
3. Risk of disease
4. Disagree, risk of blame and criticism
5. No longer feel shame
6. Weakened wisdom.

Therefore, one should abstain from drunkenness and harmful drugs and other addictions.

3. Habitual gambling.

One who habitual gambles is not honored by friends. Why?

The habitual gambler will encounter six undesirable situations.

1. As a winner one is often hated and envious.
2. As a loser the gambler regrets loss of money.
3. There is actual loss of wealth.
4. One's word has no weight in any assembly.
5. One is scorned by friends.
6. One is not marriage material nor can such a person keep a job.

To solve this problem, one should practice the following virtues: diligence, correct livelihood, association with good friends and the protection of one's goods, Intensive meditation retreat may also help.

4. Association with Bad Companions

A bad companion guides his or her friends to bad deeds. Association with a bad companion leads to gambling, sexual misconduct, exposure to gonorrhea, AIDS, syphilis, drug abuse or drunkenness lead to carelessness, cheating, lying, swindling and violence. No truth can be found in bad companions.

However, if one is very strong in one's mind and is walking the Buddhist Path, sometimes bad companions can be influenced by good example. They may see their errors and change their behavior. If you want prosperity and happiness you must avoid bad friends. And you associate with good companions who can guide and lead you to a happy life.

These are lasting friends.

Good friends guide you to be away from bad action, from drinking, harmful drugs and from smoking. Good friends are truthful, keep their promises. They stand by each other in bad times.

Good friends support you and give you material help when you need it. Good friends protect you and your family as they would their own and never cheat you. (see also “Duties in Societies part II”)

Lesson 26

The Miracle of Good Faith

Objectives :

1. To teach the student a Buddhist Jataka tale
2. To teach the student the values of giving or charity
3. To teach the student the importance of correct faith and belief
4. To teach the student the characteristics of Buddhist monks

Consequences :

1. The student can understand the characteristics of the old couple.
2. The student has learned about Buddhist Jataka tales.
3. The student can explain the importance of the correct faith and belief.
4. The student can explain the characteristics of Buddhist monks.

The Mansion's Shadow

A long time ago, an old couple lived in a shabby little hut near the big mansion of a landlord. They had neither children nor relatives living around them. Though poverty-stricken, they were good people. All their lives, they had felt very grateful to the landlord, whose mansion had protected them.

However, the landlord did not want to look at the old couple's little hut, because it made his mansion appear less beautiful. He never gave the old couple any trouble; neither did he show them any generosity.

One day the landlord wanted to hold a celebration at his mansion. He sent his servants to invite some monks to perform religious rites. He also invited his neighbors to bring food and joun

in the ceremony. No one thought to invite the old couple, because they were too poor to offer anything to the monks.

Grand Function

The landlord planned the party with his wife. He wanted to make it very grand, but did not want to spend a lot. He said, "Dear, I think the ceremony will cost too much." Knowing exactly what he meant, his wife said, "Why should we spend our money? We have plenty of fish in our pond, vegetables and coconuts in our garden and also a lot of dried hotpepper in the kitchen. We can cook as much curry as we want to." Ah, that is a very good idea, the husband replied. He put the servants to work.

The old couple heard the noise from the landlord's mansion. They wanted to join the ceremony and offer the monks the best food, too. But they could not allow to. The old man said to his wife, "Though we were not invited, I don't see why we cannot offer food to the monks." "I think so, too," said she, "I'll boil rice. Go to the landlord ask him for a fish, then I'll cook something with it. Well join them tomorrow."

The old man went to the landlord's mansion and said to the young servant boy, "Sonny, could you give me a small fish? We want to cook for the monks tomorrow. There were plenty of fish, the young servant wanted to give him some, but he was also afraid of his master. He said to the old man, "You can have the fish you want if my master lets me give one, to you. Please go and ask him yourself."

Fish Heads

The old man went to the landlord and said, Dear master, may I have some small fish? My wife will cook them. We want to join your ceremony tomorrow. The landlord was angried and said, "If I give you fish, you will make poor food because you have nothing to cook with it. It will embarrass me."

When the old man came home, his wife knew by his sad and disappointed face that the landlord did not give them any fish.

Comforting her husband, she said, "Don't worry, dear. We'll find something."

She knew where the rich man's cooks threw away the heads and bones of fish. She went there and chose only nice fish heads and bones that had some meat left on them. She took them home, cleaned and roasted them over charcoal until they were brown and crisp, then put on some salt and rolled them until they were fine fish powder.

Rice Balls and Buddhist Monks

In the morning, she wrapped the fish powder with rice, and made rice balls. The old couple were very glad that they could offer some food to the monks. When the landlord saw the poor couple coming to his mansion with their bowlful of rice balls, he became very upset. He ordered his servant to take the bowl from the old woman and throw it away. Then the landlord told the monks that the rice balls were poor food.

The monks, with their limitless of kindness, said to the landlord, "We're monks, don't mind if the food is good or bad. The old couple believe in merit-making. Let them offer what they brought with them." The landlord told his servants to collect the rice balls from the ground and let the old couple offer them to the monks themselves. The old couple were very glad that the monks ate the rice balls.



Good Faith

After making their offering, the couple were walking home happily. The old man suddenly said, "Oh, what shall we eat this evening? We have no food left in our kitchen." His wife answered, "We'll be all right. Though we ate nothing today, I'm so happy I

don't need to eat anything this evening. Don't you feel the same way? Come, let's go home dear." They went home and saw many people who had heard about their offering. These people presented the old couple rice, vegetables, fruits and other good food. The old couple were rewarded with kindness, because they had strong faith in the monks and were good people. They had performed good deeds. Now their rice pot was full of rice. And every dish and bowl that they had, was also full of good food.

Lesson 27

The Owl and the Crow

Objectives :

1. To develop spirit of forgiveness and politeness in the minds of the students
2. To educate the students how to behave with others

Consequences :

1. The student explain their feeling and opinion about forgiveness and politeness correctly.
2. The student knows and understands how to behave with others.
3. The student knows how to speak politely.

Once upon a time, at the beginning of the world, human beings assembled and chose a very good and handsome man to be their king. The four footed animals also assembled and chose the lion to be their king. The fish in the ocean chose a fish named, Ananda for their king. Then all birds in the forests assembled upon a big flat rock, crying, "Among men there is a king, and among the beasts and the fish there are kings too. But among us there is no king. We cannot live without a leader. Let's choose someone to be king."

They looked for such a bird and chose the owl. "Here is the bird we like," said they. Seeing all of them agree, a bird commaned three times, "Friends, on behalf of all birds I beg you to announce that the Owl is our king!"



On hearing the announcement, the Crow thought, "If that is what the Owl looks like when he is not angry, how will he look when he gets angry? If he merely looks at us in anger, we shall scatter like salt put in a hot pan. I don't want to make him king." Crow rose up and said, "You say that this Owl is king over all the birds. May I give you one suggestion?" All the birds said, "Alright, friend. But you ought to speak truly and well, because there are other birds who are young, wise and bright."

Given this chance, the Crow said, "Look at the Owl's face, friends! This is what he looks like when he is glad. How will he look like when he gets angry? I am not going to accept him as our king." Then he flew up in the air crying, "I don't like him! I don't like him!" The Owl rose up and chased him. Even since then, the Crow has been the enemy of the Owl. All the other birds chose a Golden Goose for their king and the meeting was over.

Merits of well-spoken and love

1. You will be loved.
2. You will not have enemies.
3. Everyone will live happily and peacefully.

The down side of anger and bad language

1. Nobody loves you.
2. Nobody wants to associate with you.
3. Enemies and destruction result.

How to control your anger

When you get angry you should keep quiet.

Stay away from the person or the subject that makes you upset.

If you have to speak, do so as briefly and politely as possible.

So forgiveness and self control are the best way to deal with other peoples' mistakes.

Lesson 28

The Power of Love

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about loving-kindness, compassion and wisdom of the Buddha
2. To cultivate loving-kindness, compassion and wisdom in the student's mind
3. To teach the student how to associate with good companions

Consequences :

1. The student has learned about loving-kindness, universal love, compassion and wisdom of the Buddha.
2. The student expresses his or her kind feeling towards living beings.
3. The student can explain the result of association with a good companions.

King Bimbisara

A year or so before the Buddha realized enlightenment, he met the King Bimbisara, who was king of Magada. The King

invited to be the Buddha to stay and rule his kingdom, but he did not accept, because he was seeking the truth. So the King asked Buddha to return and teach him when he found the truth.

The Buddha never forgot the promise he I made to King Bimbisara. When the time was right, the Buddha journeyed from the city of Alavaka to Rajagriha. Outside of the royal city, there was a hill called Vulture's Peak where the Buddha and many of his disciples lived in caves.

King Bimbisara often went to Vulture's Peak (the pointed top of a mountain where vultures lived on the flesh of dead animals) to hear the Dhamma of the Buddha. The people of the city also went there.

Soon the number of Buddha's followers grew very large. After sometimes, the King and several other rich people gave the Buddha and his disciples a park where everyone could stay and listen to his teaching in comfort. The name of the park is Veruvana, or Bamboo Grove.

Devadata

The Buddha's cousin, Devadata was born in Kapilavasthu. He became a Buddhist monk when the Buddha visited there. Devadata became very jealous. "Buddha Has many people following him," he thought, "and everyone shows him so much respect. But they all ignore me and I am as great as he is. I must destroy him." He knew that he would need help in killing the Buddha, so he went to King Bimbisara's son, Ajatsattu and asked him "Don't you want to be King? Why should your father have all the wealth and power? Come, help me kill the Buddha and I shall help you kill your father. Then you can become King in his place."

Wicked Words

The King's son listened to these wicked words and agreed to do what Devadata suggested. They tried many ways to murder the Buddha. One day, while the Buddha was sitting in meditation near Vulture's Peak, they rolled a very large boulder down the hill towards

him. But just before it reached him, the rock split in half, leaving the Buddha unharmed.

Another time, the Buddha was walking through the city with several of his disciples. Two men brought an elephant and fed it lots of liquor. When it was quite drunk, they beat it with sticks until it was wild with anger. Then they released it in the direction of the Buddha, hoping the elephant would trample him to death.

Love All Beings

When the disciples and other people saw the enraged elephant charging towards them they ran away in fear. Only Ananda, the Buddha's closest companion, stayed by his teacher's side, holding on to Buddha's robe. Instead of being frightened or angry, the Buddha felt great love and pity for the poor beast. The elephant drunk and crazed as it was felt the power of the Buddha's love. It stopped charging, walked over to the Buddha meekly and then bowed down at the Buddha's feet.

Buddha patted the elephant gently and said to Ananda, "The only way to destroy hatred is with love. Hatred cannot be defeated with more hatred. This is a very important lesson. Loving kindness and Universal compassion, therefore, should be cultivated in our mind. Only in this way we can reach real happiness in life. No evil or corruption can defeat universal loving kindness and universal compassion. All people, especially Buddha's followers, should give loving kindness to every living being without exception.

Lesson 29

The Cat and the Rooster

Objectives :

1. To teach the student about Buddhist Jataka tales
2. To teach the student about the characteristics of a Bodhisattva

Consequences :

1. The student has learned Buddhist Jataka.
2. The student can explain the characteristics of the female cat and the characteristics of a Bodhisattva.

One upon a time when Brahmadata was King in Benares (Varanasi), the Bodhisattava was born as a rooster and lived in the forest with several hundred roosters. A female cat lived near there. She often lured other roosters with her words and ate them but the Bodhisattava did not fall into her power.

The cat thought, "This rooster is very wise, but he does not know how crafty and skilled I am in the art of entrapment. I will persuade him to come to me by saying "I will be your wife" then I will eat him when he comes into my power." She went to the base of the tree where the rooster perched and said "My master, I will be your life. Leave the bough and come to me."

When the Bodhisattva heard her words, he thought, "She has eaten all my relatives now she wishes to trap me too. I will get rid of her." So he replied "Fair lady, you have four feet, I have only two. Beast and birds cannot marry."

The cat tried to deceive him in many ways, but the Bodhisattva knew her tricks. Then the Bodhisattva thought it is best to drive the cat away. So he spoke to her. "You have drunk my kindred's blood, you robbed and killed them cruelly. There is no truth and kindness in your heart while you are wooing me." The female cat was driven away and did not dare to look at him anymore.

There is no truth and kindness in the heart of a cunning person. There is no real love and sincerity in the mind of a selfish person. Everybody fears death. Therefore, knowing this, seeing others as you see yourself, do not kill others or cause others to kill. Avoid tricky and false speech. Speak truth from your heart.

Lesson 30

The Dishonest Trader

Objectives :

1. To teach the student Buddhist Jataka
2. To teach the student the way of selfish trade and good trade
3. To teach the student how to associate with good friends

Consequences :

1. The student has learned Buddhist Jataka tale.
2. The student can understand the difference between the bad and the good trader.
3. The student knows how to associate with good persons.

Once upon a time, a boy was born in a merchant's family in Benares and was named "Wise". When he grew up, he entered into a partnership with another merchant named "Wisest" and traded with him. One day, they took five hundred carts from Benares to the country where they sold their goods and made a lot of money.

On the way home when the time came to divide the money Wisest said, "I deserve a double share. "Why?" said Wise. "Because you are only Wise; I am Wisest. You ought to have only one share to my two" Wisest commented. Wise Protested, We had equal investment in the goods, the oxen and the carts." "Why should you have two shares of the profit?" "Because I am Wisest" he said.

At first they talked, but then, they argued. Wisest thought of trick. He hid his father in a hollow tree. When the two came past the tree, the father was to say "Wisest should have a double share."

Wisest went to Wise and asked that they both visit the tree spirit. When they got to the tree Wisest said "Oh tree spirit, here we stands Wise and Wisest. We have been partners in trade. Tell us what share of profit should each of us have?"

"Wise should receive only one share, but Wisest should receive two." Said the voice from the tree. Wise decided to find out whether there was a tree spirit in there. So he filled the hollow trunk with straw and set fire to it. Wisest's father, abit burned got out from the tree in a big hurry. So Wise won out and the profit were devided equally.

What we learn from the story

Wisest was dishonest to his friend. His mind was grounded in greed. He was a selfish and it was not good to make friends with him. He who is dishonest is not a good friend. Nobody wants to associate with him. Nobody likes and loves him sincerely.

NOTE : Greed is wicked indeed.

Wisdom is better than wealth.

Earn your living honestly.

Never get rich by deception and tricks.

(No corruption in earning livelihood)



GLOSSARY

Anger = The strong feeling that comes when one is wronged or insulted, or when one sees cruelty or injustice. This feeling makes people want to quarrel or fight.(n.)

Arahant = Enlightened disciples of the Buddha. Their minds are free from hatred, craving, delusion and all kinds of defilement. (adj.) (n.)

Asalha Month = The eight Lunar month, which occurs in the second or third week of July each year. Monks observe Rains Retreat this month. (n.)

Ascetic = Self-disciplined, an ascetic lead a life of severe self-discipline. (adj.) Person who leads a severely simple life without ordinary pleasures. (n.) Ascetically (adv.), Asceticism (n.)

Auspicious = (adj.) Favorable time, Favorable occasion.

Bhikkhu, Bhikkhus P, n. = Buddhist monks, ascetic, hermits,

Bodhisattva = Skt., **Bodhisatra** = P. To be the Buddha, who works for the happiness of many.

Bodhi Tree = The tree under which the Buddh realized the Truth, enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Magadh city, Vihar State, North Eastern India.

Brahma = A Hindu God, who created all creatures in the universe. The Buddha explained Brahma as a person who possesses the four Sublime Dhamma namely; Loving Kindness, Universal compassion, sympathetic joy and Tranquillity. Great One, Noble One.

Brahmin = The highest classification in Hindu caste system. A member of the highest Hindu priestly caste.

Buddha = The Founder of Buddhism, the Enlightened One, Noble one. The Perfect One, The Exalted One, A Wakened One. He founded Buddhism 588 B.C. in India. Gautama Buddha.

Buddhanussati = P.,n., Recollection of the Buddha's virtues. Recollection the Buddha's virtues as meditation object.

Buddhism = n. The teaching of the Buddha founded in India by Guatama Buddha or Siddhartha, the Enlightened One.

Charity = n. Principle taught by the Buddha, Kindness in giving help to the poor, willingness to treat other persons with kindness. Religious society or – organization for helping those who are in needs and the poor.

Circumambulation = n. The way Buddhists march in procession around the Uposatha Hall, (the main chapel or Main Buddha Hall) they keep their right side towards the hall as a sign of respect and walk rounds around it three times.

Circumambulatory; adj., Circumambulate; = v. Walking around

Compassion = n. Karuna; = Pali. Feeling for the sufferings of others, Pity, prompting one to give help to one who are in need and suffer.

Compassionate Mind, Compassionate = (adj.) see compassion.

Contentment = n. Satisfaction with what one has or is. Opposite of greed. Being happy with what one has.

Concentration Meditation = n., **Samatha Bhavana** P., The way to focus one's mind, The way to tranquilize one's mind, the way to get the mind calm and peaceful, the way to train the mind, to develop mindfulness and awareness which enable the mind to see thing as it really is (Vipassana Meditation) (Samatha Bhavana and Vipassana Bhavana; Tranquility meditation and Insight meditation)

Craving = n. strong desire, strong sensual desire. Passionate yearning which can lead to mental or emotional enslavement.

Delusion = n. False opinion or belief. Unclear thoughts, an unclear mind, deluted mind or mind with delusions.

Desire = n., v., 1. Strong sexual attraction,
 2. earnest wish,
 3. craving.

Dhamma = P., Dharma = Skt., The Law of Nature, the teaching of the Buddha, the truth of what really is.

Dhammanussati = n. P., Recollection of virtues of Buddha's teaching, the law of nature or nature law.

Dissatisfaction = n. not being satisfied or not happy with what one has or got.

Doctrine = n. The body of teaching, the teaching of Buddhist temples or monasteries.

Eight Worldly Conditions = Loka - Dhamma = P., The eight worldly conditions of Buddhism: To be thought as four pairs ;

1. gain – loss,
2. Fame - dishonor
3. praise – blame
4. Happiness – suffering

Embodiment = n.

1. Mat which is made real this dimension
(He is the embodiment of kindness).
2. To give form to ideas to feeling or views.

Enlightenment = n. the state of perfect mind. (The Buddha realized the state of perfect mind) The period (8th century) when men believed that reason and science would advance human progress. Work for the enlightenment of humankind The Buddha realized the enlightenment, the state of perfect mind, perfect peace. (Enlightenment is not direct translation of Nibbana, therefore, enlightenment according to the Western thought may not be the same as translation of Nibbana in the Eastern thought. If enlightenment, in the western thought, is the state of perfect mind, the mind without hatred, ignorance, selfish desire, pure mind, then it would be the same as Eastern thought = *Author*)

First Sermon = n. First Lecture, the first Dhamma talk, the Buddha gave to his first five disciples at Sarnath near Varanasi or Benares city. Northeastern India. It is known as Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, P.

Fourfold Assembly = n. Four events which happened at the Buddhist assembly at Veruvan (P.) Bamboo Grove built and offered to the Buddha and his disciples by King Bimbisara.

The first monastery in Buddhism. There are as follow ;

1. All 1250 Monks were, Arahants.
2. They had been ordained by the Buddha himself.
3. They assembled spontaneously without any prior call.
4. It was the full moon day of Magha (March or late February).

Generosity = n. Nobility, goodness, excellence, knowledge, the quality of spontaneous sharing of goods, ready to offer something to someone who needs.

Grateful = adj., Katanyu Katavedita = thankful

Greed = n., Lobha P. Excessive desire to acquire and possess, wealth, over and above what is right or reasonable.

Hatred = n. Violent dislike, source of violence and crime.

Hindu = n. A person whose religion is Hinduism mostly Hindu's live in India.

Hinayana = n. "Small vehicle." An early sect of Buddhism that is no longer practiced. This sect is not the same as Theravada today.

Gratitude = n. Katanyu Katavedita: Thankfulness, for benefits received or kindness rendered.

Homeage = n. Fealty, allegiance, loyalty and public expressions of the Same. We pay homage to the Buddha.

Humility = n. Humble state of mind, opposite of "pride". "She is very humble towards her superiors."

Ignorance = n. Lack of education, knowledge, cultivation.

Impermanence = n. Constantly change, movement “The cycle of rising and falling or rising and declining”

Insight Meditation = n. Insight = N. the way to develop comprehension, power of Understanding

Insight Meditation = n. Vipassana Bhavana P., The cultivation a high level of understanding the nature of things. The endeavor to achieve complete insight into the real nature of all phenomena.

Kathin, Kathina = n. Litterally it refers to “Hoop-Frame” prepared for robes making. Special ceremony in which yellow robes are offered to Buddhist monks after Rains Retreat. Rains Retreat occurs in the mid-July to mid October. Kathina can be done only from the end of the Retreat to the first day of the Waning moon of the following Lunar month.

Lay Disciples = n. It refers to Buddha’s non-ordained disciple who sincerely observe Five Precepts and Buddhist doctrine. Not a monk or novice or nuns.

Lay People = n. People who are not ordained and may not be Buddhist and not monk, novice or nuns.

Loy Krathong = n. Festival of floating, leaving bowls on the rivers, or canals. This festival observed on the full moon night the 12th lunar month, (late October or early November.)

Liberality = n. Nobleness of the mind, the enlightened and free from all kinds of mental defilements, enlightenment of mind, generosity.

Lunar Month = n. Average time between successive new moons (about 29th days.) A lunar year consists of 12 lunar months.

Mahayana = n. Northern school of Buddhism, “Great Vehicle.” This school formed a hundred years after the Buddha’s lifetime.

Main Chapel = n. In Buddhism, the sacred place, where Buddhist ceremonies are performed. It is different from main chapel in Christian. Called UPOSATHA in Pali.

Meditation = n. How to control and focus one's mind. How to clear one's mind, to purify the mind of impurities. Meditation make the mind peaceful in order to let wisdom arise.

Meritorious Deeds =n. Good and wholesome action. For example, offering funds to needy students or monks for their study. Donating funds to set up hospitals, schools or meditation centers.

Middle Way = n. Noble Eightfold Path starting with Right Understanding and ending with Right Concentration. The way leading to Nibbana.

Monastery = n. Temple where Buddhist monks stay.

Monks = n. Buddhist Priests who observe 227 precepts of discipline. Member of a community of men living together under religious vows in a monastery.

Morality = n.

- 1) Good behavior,
- 2) Practical moral teaching,
- 3) Principles of right and wrong conduct such as Five precepts in Buddhism.

Novice = n. Young monks who are not 20 years old and not yet ordained. They observe 10 precepts. P. Samanera = (pronunciation as *-Sar-ma-ne-ra.*)

Obedience = n. Comprehensive and intelligent acceptance. To do what one is directed to do wisely with right understanding.

Outcast = n. adj. Person or animal driven out of home or society, state of having been expelled or not belonging. In Brahmanism in India, one who belongs to lowest level or caste of society.

Ordination = n.

1. To be formally accepted as a monk for monastic life.
2. Ceremony which formalized the beginning of a religious life.

Panca-sīla =P., Five Precepts in Buddhism,

1. Not to kill,
2. Not to steal,
3. To abstain from adultery and sexual misconduct,
4. Not to lie, and
5. Not to take intoxicating drinks and harmful drugs.

Pañña = Pan-Yaa, :P. Wisdom, quality of clear mind, insight, intelligence, ability to solve problems in the proper ways.

Patience = n. Ability to wait for results, to deal with problems calmly and without haste: Patient : adj.

Precept = n. see Sila, Panca-Sila

Rains Retreat = n. A period of quiet and rest, during the rainy season. Monks are required to live their life in a particular place to study Dhamma, practice meditation and not to wander about freely.

Refuge = n. Protection, from trouble and danger.

A place of shelter. "Seek refuge from the floods." Books are refuge of the lonely. I go to the Buddha for refuge.

Sala Trees = n. the type of tree under which the Buddha was born, also the tree under which he passed away.

Samadhi =P. n. Concentration tranquillity, the practice of centering the mind on a single sensation with right Samadhi, no matter what level of calm is reached, there is awareness, full mindfulness and clear comprehension. Samadhi can give rise to wisdom.

Saṅgha =P. n. A community of Buddhist monks or/and disciples of the Buddha. Conventionally, this refers to the Buddhist monkhood. Ideally, it refers to the Buddha's followers, whether lay or ordained, who have attained at least the first of the transcendent paths culminating in *Nibbana*, Enlightenment.

- Sanghanussati*** = P. recollection of virtues of Buddha's disciples.
- Selflessness** = n. Without ego, sense of self. No "I", "you", "me" or "mine".
- Sermon** = n. Preaching, speech, teaching given by the Buddha.
- Sīla*** = P. Precept, moral code of conduct.
- Songkrant / Songkran** = n. Festival of the sprinkling of perfumed water. It is observed in Thailand, Burma, Lao and India in mid of April.
- Sukhothai Period** = n. Sukhothai Kingdom, Sukhothai Dynasty of Thailand. (approximately 1157-1427 A.D.) Theravada Buddhism flourished under King Ramkamhaeng the Great in the Sukhothai period.
- Temple** = n. Buddhist monastery monks reside.
- Theravada*** = n. Southern school of Buddhism, doctrine of elder monks the original tradition of Buddhism.
- Triple Gem** = n. The Buddha, the teachings of the Buddha and the Noble disciples of the Buddha.
- Visakha Month** = n. Sixth Lunar month around May. On the full moon day of this month, the Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and passed away.
- *Visakha Puja** = n. To pay homage to the Buddha on the full moon day of Visakha month.
- Wisdom** = n. a quality of being comprehension and realization of the truth and real nature of phenomena. Wisely thought.

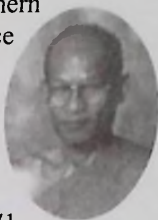
*NOTE= * At the present, 2001, we have International Visakha Puja in the West Coast, Midwest and East Coast areas, these activities have been observed by international Buddhist communities in the different part of the USA; Namely; in the East Coast, International Visakha Puja is observed and organized by Buddhist Council of New York and International Buddhist Communities, Washington, D.C. and Buddhist communities in the areas as well, the author is a one of founding committee and coordinator of Washington, D.C. International Visakha Puja at Wat Thai Washington, D.C. in 1999. In the Midwest area, International Visakha Puja is observed and organized by Buddhist Council of the Midwest, as well as Buddhist communities in the areas, (the Author has been being the president of BCM for four years (1993-1997). International Visakha in the West Coast is observed and organized by Buddhist Council of Southern California.*

Further Reading Materials

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About the Author

Ven. Dr. Chuen Phangcham was born in Northern Thailand in 1942. He joined monastic life as a novice in 1961 at the age of 19, he got higher ordination as a Buddhist monk in 1963. He completed his three years Dhamma studies in 1963, and then came to Bangkok and stay at Wat Paknam, Bangkok, Thailand in 1963 for his further education. He joined eight years course programme at Mahachula Buddhist University in 1971 and completed the course in 1979. He has three years experiences in education administration in Srisaket Temple High school, Wat Mahabuddharam, Srisaket Province, Thailand.



Dr. Phangcham completed his Master Degree in 1980 from Delhi University, India. In 1982, he completed his Master of Philosophy in Education from the same university. Finally he completed his Ph.D. degree in education in 1985 from Delhi University, India.

Dr. Phangcham is sitting in the Board of Trustees the Council for a Parliament of World Religions CPWR, President of Buddhist Council of the Midwest, President Emeritus of Buddhist Council of the Midwest BCM, Co-president of American Buddhist Congress ABC, Founder of Buddha Vihara, the Midwest Buddhist Meditation Center MBMC, Warren, Michigan, Meditation instructor of Insight Meditation Center of Chicago, IL. Since 1986. Coordinator of "International Visakha 1999" at Wat Thai Washington, D.C. and at Buddha Vihara of Stockholm, Sweden, the author of "Meditation Instruction and Practice" He wrote many booklets and articles on Buddhism and human development, Board of Directors, Council of Thai Bhikkhu in the USA.

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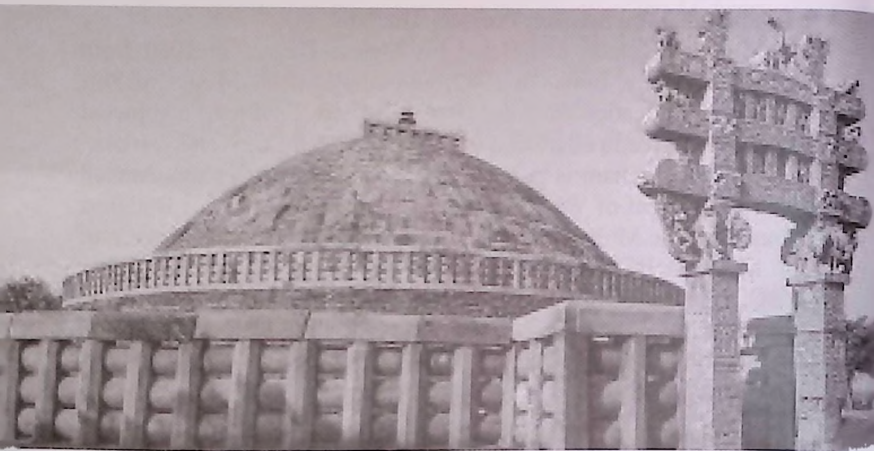
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Bodh Gaya,
where the Buddha attained
enlightenment, Gaya in India

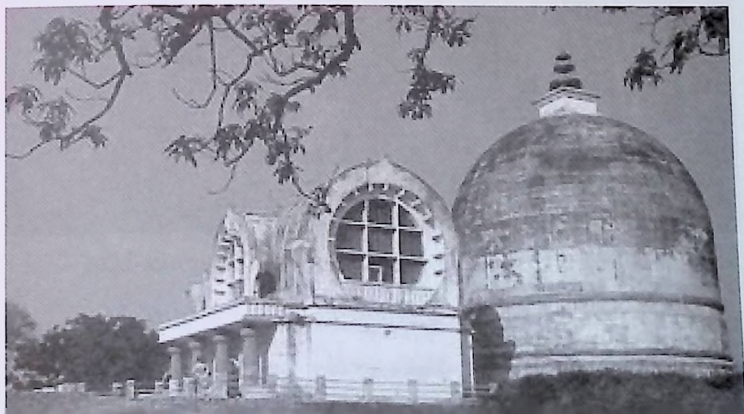
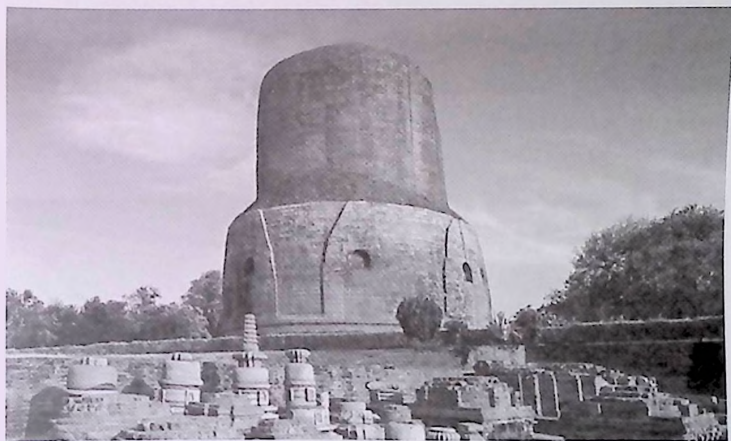
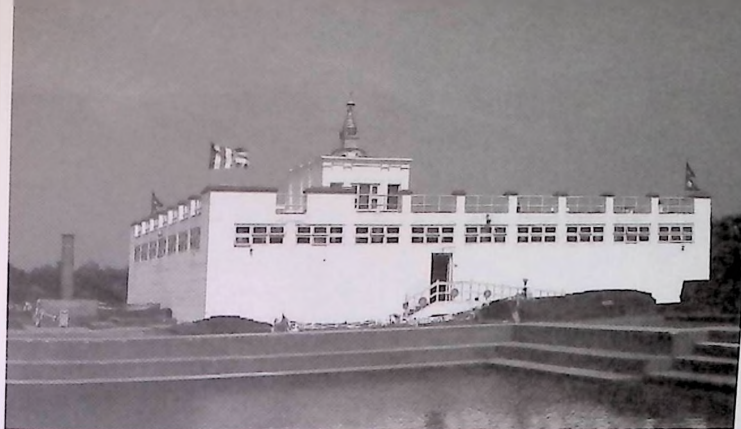
Sanji, the Great Stupa,
built at the time of
King Ashoka the Great,
Maharajata, India

(opposite page)

Lumbini, *the place the*
to-be Buddha, Siddhattha
was born, Nepal

Sarnath, *where the Buddha*
delivered the first sermon,
near Varanasi, India

Kusinara, *where the Buddha*
passed away, India





*Inside Main Buddha Hall, Wat Dhammaram,
Vipassana Meditation Center; Chicago, Illinois, USA*



Main Buddha Hall, Wat Thai of Los Angeles, California, USA



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